FOUR CALIPHS FOUR IMAMS

KHULFAA RAASHIDOON

ABU BAKR,
UMAR,
UTHMAN,
ALI

**

- **ABU HANIFAH,**
- **MALIK BIN ANAS,**
- **IDRIS SHAFI'I,**
- **AHMAD BIN HAMBAL**

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Contents

Glossary

adhân: the call to prayer.

faqîh, pl. *fuqahâ':* person of superior understanding; jurisprudent.

fatwa, pl. *fatâwa:* a qualified legal response to a specific question.

fiqh: superlative understanding; jurisprudence.

al-fiqh al-akbar = *usûl*

"The Four Imams": Abu Hanifa, Malik, al-Shafi`i, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

"The Four Rightly-Guided Successors": Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, `Umar al-Faruq, `Uthman ibn `Affan, and `Ali ibn Abi Talib.

"The Four Schools": The Hanafi School, the Maliki School, the Shafi`i School, and the Hanbali School.

"The Four *Sunan*": Al-Tirmidhi's *Sunan*, al-Nasa'i's *Sunan*, Abu Dawud's *Sunan*, and Ibn Majah's *Sunan*.

gharîb: strange, isolated, obscure; applied to a hadith chain, it means that it has only one narrator among the Companions and the subsequent links. Note: this is not an index of its authenticity as a *gharîb* hadith may be either *sahîh*, *hasan*, or *da`îf*. A famous authentic*gharîb* hadith is: "Actions are only according to intentions," which is narrated from `Umar ibn al-Khattab alone by Bukhari and Muslim. Applied to lexical terms, *gharîb* means difficult. There are manuals devoted to the *gharîb* or difficult words of Qur'an and hadith.

hasan: fair, authentic. Applied to a hadith or its chain of transmission.

istilâh = mustalah

lâ ilâha illallâh: "There is no God except Allah." Together with the affirmation that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, this phrase enters one into Islam. "The people of *lâ ilâha illallâh*" are the Muslims.

karâma, pl. *karâmât:* miraculous grant from Allah to one of his Friends.

mu'adhdhin: one who calls out *adhân*, the call to prayer.

mufti: qualified to issue legal opinions and responses.

mu`jiza*, pl. *mu`jizât: mind-boggling miracle at the hands of a Prophet.

mujtahid: qualified to issue expert legal rulings.

mustalah: methodology and terminology.

nahw: Arabic grammar and related disciplines.

"The Nine Books": Al-Bukhari's *Sahih*, Muslim's *Sahih*, al-Tirmidhi's *Sunan*, al-Nasa'i's *Sunan*, Abu Dawud's *Sunan*, Ibn Majah's*Sunan*, Malik's *Muwatta',* Ahmad's *Musnad*, and al-Darimi's *Musnad*.

"The Six Books": Al-Bukhari's *Sahih*, Muslim's *Sahih*, al-Tirmidhi's *Sunan*, al-Nasa'i's *Sunan*, Abu Dawud's *Sunan*, and Ibn Majah's*Sunan*.

"The Two *Sahih*s": Al-Bukhari's *Sahih* and Muslim's *Sahih*.

"The Two Shaykhs": Abu Bakr al-Siddiq and `Umar al-Faruq; in hadith terminology, al-Bukhari and Muslim.

sahîh: sound, rigorously authentic. The highest grading of a hadith or its chain of transmission. Also applied to a book of *sahîh* hadiths.

Salaf: The righteous Muslims of the first three centuries of Islam.

tawhîd: the affirmation of Oneness. Islamic belief and doctrine. Another name for Sura *al-Ikhlas* (#112).

usûl, sing. *asl:* the foundations of Religion; Islamic doctrine. Also known as *`ilm al-tawhîd*, and *al-fiqh al-akbar*.

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ABU BAKR AL-SIDDIQ,

`Atiq ibn Abi Quhafa, *Shaykh al-Islam,* `Abd Allah ibn `Uthman ibn `Amir al-Qurashi al-Taymi (d. 13 Hijri), the Prophet's intimate friend after Allah, exclusive companion at the Prophet's Basin *(hawd)* and in the Cave, greatest supporter, closest confidant, first spiritual inheritor, first of the men who believed in him and the only one who did so unhesitatingly, first of his four Rightly-Guided successors, first of the ten promised men of Paradise, and first of the Prophet's Community to enter Paradise.

Alone among the Companions, Abu Bakr repeatedly led the Community in prayer in the lifetime of the Prophet.[1]

The latter used to call him by his patronyms of Abu Bakr and Ibn Abi Quhafa, and he named him with the attributes "The Most Truthful" *(al-Siddîq)* and "Allah's Freedman From the Fire" *(`Atîq Allâh min al-nâr).*[2]

When the Quraysh confronted the Prophet after the Night Journey, they turned to Abu Bakr and said: "Do you believe what he said, that

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[1]As narrated from Abu Musa al-Ash`ari by Bukhari and Muslim. This is a mass-narrated hadith authentically reported also from `A'isha, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Ibn `Umar, `Abd Allah ibn Zam`a, Abu Sa`id al-Khudri, `Ali, and Hafsa. Note: Abu Bakr did not lead the Prophet in prayer. When the Prophet came out to pray in congregation for the last time, Abu Bakr moved to give him his place as imam, but the Prophet told him to stay where he was and prayed sitting to the left of Abu Bakr while the latter and the congregation remained standing. The hadiths to that effect state: "Abu Bakr followed the Prophet while the people followed Abu Bakr." Further, Abu Bakr continued to call *Allahu Akbar* out loud to let the people hear. Narrated from `A'isha by Muslim and al-Nasa'i.

[2]The Prophet's hadith "You are Allah's Freedman From the Fire" is narrated from `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr by Ibn Hibban in his *Sahih* (15:280 #6864), al-Tabarani, and al-Bazzar, all with sound chains, and from `A'isha by al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, and al-Tabarani, all with weak chains as indicated by Shu`ayb al-Arna'ut.

he went last night to the Hallowed House and came back before morning?" He replied: "If he said it, then I believe him, yes, and I do believe him regarding what is farther than that. I believe the news of heaven he brings, whether in the space of a morning or in that of an evening journey." Because of this Abu Bakr was named *al-Siddîq*: the Very Truthful, the One Who Never Lies.[3]

Among the Companions who narrated from him: Anas, `A'isha, Jabir, Abu Hurayra, the four `Abd Allahs (Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Umar, Ibn `Amr), `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Ali. The latter is one of the narrators of the Prophet's hadith cited by Abu Bakr: "We [Prophets] do not leave anything as inheritance. What we leave behind is charity *(sadaqa)*."[4]

`Umar said: "Abu Bakr's faith outweighs the faith of the entire *Umma*."[5] This is confirmed by the following hadith: The Prophet asked: "Did any of you see anything in his dream?" A man said to the Prophet: "O Messenger of Allah, I saw in my dream as if a balance came down from the heaven in which you were weighed against Abu Bakr and outweighed him, then Abu Bakr was weighed against `Umar and outweighed him, then

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[3]Narrated from Anas by Ibn Abi Hatim in his *Tafsir*, from `Ali and `A'isha by Abu Nu`aym in *Ma`rifa al-Sahaba*, and from `A'isha by al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak* (3:62, 3:76). The latter said its chain is sound and Dhahabi concurred. Ibn Sa`d narrated something similar in his *Tabaqat* (1:144), and al-Suyuti in *al-Durr al-Manthur* (4:155).

[4]Narrated from `Aisha, `Umar, and `Ali, by Muslim, al-Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud.

[5]Narrated from `Umar *(mawq√f)* with a sound chain by Ibn al-Mubarak in *al-Zuhd*, al-Bayhaqi in *Shu`ab al-Iman*, and al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi in *Nawadir al-Usul* as stated by al-`Iraqi in *al-Mughni*, al-Sakhawi in *al-Maqasid*, and al-`Ajluni in *Kashf al-Khafa'*. Al-Sakhawi added: "It is narrated from Ibn `Umar from the Prophet *(marf√`)* with a weak chain by Ibn `Adi, however, it is strengthened by other chains and is corroborated." Al-Zarkashi in *al-Tadhkira* said: "Its meaning was stated in the *Sunan*." He and al-Sakhawi are referring to the sound *(sahεh)* narration of Abu Bakrah and Safina.

`Umar was weighed against `Uthman and outweighed him, then the balance was raised up." This displeased the Prophet who said: "Successorship of prophethood *(khilâfa nubuwwa)*! Then Allah shall give kingship to whomever He will."[6] `Umar also said: "The best of this Community after its Prophet is Abu Bakr."[7] `Ali named him and `Umar the *Shaykh al-Islam* of the Community[8] and said: "The best of this Community after its Prophet are Abu Bakr and `Umar,"[9] "The most courageous of people is Abu Bakr,"[10] and "The greatest in reward among people for the volumes of the Qur'an is Abu Bakr, for he was the first of those who gathered the Qur'an between two covers."[11] He was also the first to name it *mushaf*.

Abu Bakr's high rank is indicated, among other signs, by the fact that to deny his Companionship to the Prophet entails disbelief *(kufr)*, unlike the denial of the Companionship of `Umar, `Uthman, and `Ali to the Prophet.[12] This is due to the mention of this companionship in the verse: **"The second of two when the two were in the cave, and he said unto his companion: Grieve not"** (9:40) which refers, by Consensus, to the Prophet and Abu Bakr. Allah further praised him above the

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[6]Narrated from Abu Bakrah by Ahmad with three chains, Abu Dawud, and al-Tirmidhi who said: *hasan sahεh*, and from Safina by Abu Dawud with a fair chain and al-Bazzar with a fair chain as indicated by al-Haythami in *Majma` al-Zawa'id*. Al-Tirmidhi's narration omits the last statement of the Prophet. Al-Hakim narrated it with a chain similar to al-Tirmidhi's and graded it *sahεh*, and al-Dhahabi concurred.

[7]Narrated by al-Lalika'i in *al-Sunna*.

[8]Narrated by al-Sakhawi in the introduction to his *al-Jawahir wa al-Durar*.

[9]See the documentation of this hadith in the entry of `Ali ib Abi Talib.

[10]Narrated from `Ali by al-Bazzar in his *Musnad*.

[11]Narrated from `Abd Khayr by Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (3:193), Abu Ya`la, and al-Suddi with a fair chain as stated by al-Dhahabi.

[12]As reported from `Ali al-Qari by al-Mubarakfuri in *Tuhfa al-Ahwadhi* (10:106).

rest by saying: **“Those who spent and fought before the victory are not upon a level (with the rest of you).”** (57:10)

The Prophet confirmed his high rank in many of his sayings, among them:

- “Allah gave one of His servants a choice between this world and what He has with Him, and that servant chose what Allah has with Him.” Abu Bakr wept profusely and we wondered why he wept, since the Prophet had told of a servant that was given a choice. The Prophet himself was that servant, as Abu Bakr later told us. The Prophet continued: “Among those most dedicated to me in his companionship and property is Abu Bakr. If I were to take an intimate friend other than my Lord, I would take Abu Bakr. But what binds us is the brotherhood of Islam and its love. Let no door [of the Prophet’s mosque] remain open except Abu Bakr’s.”[13]

- “I am excused, before each of my friends, of any intimate friendship with anyone. But if I were to take an intimate friend, I would take Ibn Abi Quhafa as my intimate friend. Verily, your Companion is the intimate friend of Allah!” [14]

- “You [Abu Bakr] are my companion at the Basin and my companion in the Cave.”[15]

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[13]Spoken by the Prophet in the last days of his life, as narrated from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri by Bukhari and Ahmad. The latter’s version states: “the brotherhood of Islam or its love.”

[14]Spoken by the Prophet in the last days of his life, as narrated from Ibn Mas`ud by al-Tirmidhi who said it is *hasan sahεh*.

[15]Narrated from Ibn `Umar by al-Tirmidhi who said it is *hasan sahεh*.

- "Call Abu Bakr and his son so that I will put something down in writing, for I fear lest someone ambitious forward a claim, and Allah and the believers refuse anyone other than Abu Bakr."[16]

- `Amr ibn al-`As asked: "O Messenger of Allah, who is the most beloved of all men to you?" He replied: "Abu Bakr."[17]

- "It is impermissible for a people among whom is Abu Bakr, to be led by other than him."[18]

- "Take for your leaders those who come after me: Abu Bakr and `Umar."[19]

- "O`Ali! Abu Bakr and `Umar are the leaders of the mature inhabitants of Paradise and its youth among the first and the last, except for Prophets and Messengers."[20]

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[16]Spoken by the Prophet in the last days of his life, as narrated from `A'isha by Muslim and Ahmad in his *Musnad*.

[17]Narrated from `Amr ibn al-`As by Muslim in his *Sahih*.

[18]Narrated from `A'isha by al-Tirmidhi who said it is a fair *(hasan)* hadith. This is also the grading given by al-Mubarakfuri in *Tuhfa al-Ahwadhi* (10:109), who cites Ibn Kathir's grading of *sahεh*. Ibn al-Jawzi's claim that it is forged was rejected by the scholars except for al-Dhahabi.

[19]Narrated from Hudhayfa and Ibn Mas`ud by Ahmad with several good chains, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah. Al-Tirmidhi said it is a fair *(hasan)* narration.

[20]Narrated from `Ali by Ahmad in his *Musnad* with a fair chain because of al-Hasan ibn Zayd ibn Hasan. Ahmad Shakir in his edition (1:424 #602) said he is trustworthy *(thiqa)*, while Ibn Hajar in *al-Taqrib* (p. 161 #1242) said of him: "Credible, but errs" *(sad√q yahim)*. Also narrated from Anas by al-Tirmidhi with a fair chain, and û with weaker chains û from several other Companions such as Abu Juhayfa, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Sa`id al-Khudri, and Jabir ibn `Abd Allah by Ibn Majah, al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim in his *Tarikh*, Abu Ya`la, al-Tabarani, al-Bazzar, and others. Al-Munawi in his discussion of this narration in *Fayd al-Qadir* mentioned that al-`Iraqi had declared it *hasan sahεh*. Al-Suyuti also indicated it is *sahεh* in *al-Jami` al-Saghir*. See also al-Tahawi, *Mushkil al-Athar* (2:391).

- "The sun never rose nor set over anyone better than Abu Bakr."[21]

- "The Prophet used to hold nightly conversations with Abu Bakr in the latter's house, discussing the affairs of Muslims, and I [`Umar] was present with them."[22]

- `Umar was angered by Abu Bakr one day and left him in anger. Abu Bakr followed after him, asking his forgiveness, but `Umar refused and shut his door in his face. Abu Bakr then went to the Prophet and took hold of his garment until his knee showed. The Prophet said: "Your companion has been arguing!" Abu Bakr greeted him and said: "There was a dispute between me and `Umar, then I felt remorse and asked him to forgive me but he would not, so I came to you." The Prophet said, repeating three times: "Allah forgives you, O Abu Bakr! Allah forgives you, O Abu Bakr! Allah forgives you, O Abu Bakr!" Then `Umar felt remorse and went asking for Abu Bakr at his house without finding him. He came to the Prophet and greeted him, but the Prophet's face changed with displeasure. Seeing this, Abu Bakr sat up on his knees in fear before the Prophet, saying twice: "O Messenger of Allah! I am the one who transgressed. O Messenger of Allah! I am the one who transgressed."

[21]Narrated from Abu al-Darda' by al-Tabarani and Ibn `Asakir with a fair chain as stated in *Kanz al-`Ummal*. The complete hadith states that the Prophet said to Abu al-Darda': "Do not walk in front of your better. Verily, Abu Bakr is the best of those upon whom the sun rose or set."

[22]Narrated from `Umar by al-Tirmidhi and Ahmad with sound chains as stated by Ibn Hajar in *Fath al-Bari*, book of Knowledge *(`ilm)*, chapter entitled "Nightly Conversation Concerning Knowledge."

The Prophet said to the people: "Allah sent me to you and you all said: 'You are lying!'
But Abu Bakr said: 'He said the truth.'
Abu Bakr gave me solace with his person and property.
Will you leave my companion alone once and for all?
Will you leave my companion alone once and for all?!"
After this Abu Bakr was never harmed again.[23]

- "Jibril came to me, took me by the hand, and showed me the gate through which my Community shall enter Paradise."

  Abu Bakr said: "Would that I were with you to see it!"
  The Prophet said: "Did you not know?
  You will be the first of all my Community to enter it."[24]

Al-Suyuti relates through Ibn Sa`d's report from `A'isha her description of Abu Bakr:
"He was a man with fair skin, thin, emaciated, with a sparse beard, a slightly hunched frame, sunken eyes and protruding forehead, and the bases of his fingers were hairless."[25]

He was the foremost genealogist of the Quraysh and the best of them at interpreting dreams after the Prophet according to Ibn Sirin.
`A'isha related that both he and `Uthman had relinquished drinking wine even in the Time of Ignorance.
His caliphate lasted two years and three months in which he opened up the lands of Syria and Iraq for the Muslims, suppressed apostasy among the Arab tribes, fought the pseudo-Prophets

- al-Aswad al-`Ansi,

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[23]Narrated from Abu al-Darda' by Bukhari.
[24]Narrated from Abu Hurayra by al-Hakim who declared it *sahεh*, and Dhahabi concurred.
[25]Al-Suyuti, *Tarikh al-Khulafa'* (p. 45).

- Tulayha al-Asadi who recanted and declared his prophethood in Najd,[26]
- and Musaylima the Liar who was killed in the devastating battle of al-Yamama.

Imam al-Nawawi pointed out that Abu Bakr's genealogical tree alone regroups four successive generations of Companions of the Prophet:

- his father Abu Quhafa,
- himself,
- his daughter Asma',
- and her son `Abd Allah bin Zubair,
- in addition to Abu Bakr's son `Abd al-Rahman and his grandson Abu `Atiq.

Nawawi states that only one hundred and forty-two hadiths of the Prophet are narrated from Abu Bakr.[27]

He comments: "The reason for this scarcity, despite the seniority of his companionship to the Prophet, is that his death pre-dated the dissemination of hadiths and the endeavor of the Followers to hear, gather, and preserve them."

Among Abu Bakr's sayings: "Whoever fights his ego for Allah's sake, Allah will protect Him against what He hates."[28]

Main sources: Al-Nawawi, *Tahdhib al-Asma' wa al-Lughat* 2:181-182; Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya al-Awliya'* 1:62-72 #1; al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* 1-2:467-508 #2.

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[26]He repented before the death of Abu Bakr and died a martyr on the Muslim side in the battle of Nahawand in the year 21.

[27]I.e. without repetitions through various chains. Suyuti in *Tarikh al-Khulafa'* (p. 96-104) documents fully over a hundred of them, which he follows up with over a hundred of his own sayings.

[28]Cited by Ibn Qudama in *Mukhtasar Minhaj al-Qasidin*.

`UMAR IBN AL-KHATTAB ibn Nufayl ibn `Abd al-`Uzza ibn Rayyah, *Shaykh al-Islam*, *Amir al-Mu'minin*, Abu Hafs al-Qurashi al-`Adawi al-Faruq (d. 23). Among the Companions who narrated from him: `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Hurayra, and especially his son Ibn `Umar upon whose narrations Malik relied in his *Muwatta'*. He was described as fair-skinned with some reddishness, tall with a large build, fast-paced, and a skilled fighter and horseman. He embraced Islam after having fought it, in the year 6 of the Prophethood, at age twenty-seven. This was the result of the Prophet's explicit supplication: "O Allah! Strengthen Islam with `Umar ibn al-Khattab."[29] In his time Islam entered Egypt, Syria, Sijistan, Persia, and other regions. He died a martyr, stabbed in the back while at prayer by a Sabean or Zoroastrian slave, at sixty-six years of age.

[29]Narrated from Ibn `Umar, Thawban, Ibn `Abbas, `A'isha, `Ali, and al-Zubayr ibn al-`Awamm by Ibn Majah, al-Hakim (3:83), al-Bayhaqi in his *Sunan* (6:370), al-Tabarani in *al-Kabir*, and Ibn al-Najjar. Al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar* (1/2:510) said its chains are good, and al-Haythami in *Majma` al-Zawa'id* (#14404-14406, 2180) indicated likewise for al-Tabarani's chain, while al-Busiri in *Zawa'id Ibn Majah* stated the latter's narration was weak. The hadith itself is weak by the criterion of Bukhari, al-Haythami, al-Busiri, Abu Hatim al-Razi, and al-Nasa'i, while it is authentic according to Ibn Ma`in, Ibn Hibban, al-Dhahabi. Another version states: "O Allah! Strengthen Islam with the dearest of the two to you: `Umar ibn al-Khattab or Abu Jahl [`Umar ibn Hisham]." Narrated from Ibn `Umar by Ahmad and al-Tirmidhi who said it is *hasan sahεh gharεb*, and by him from Ibn `Abbas with a weaker chain. Suyuti in *al-Durar al-Muntathira* reported from Ibn `Asakir that the discrepancy is explained by the fact that the Prophet first called for either of the two, then it was made clear to him that Abu Jahl's conversion was precluded and he concentrated his *tawajjuh* on `Umar.

`Umar ibn al-Khattab

`Umar al-Faruq was second only to Abu Bakr al-Siddiq in closeness to and approval from the Prophet. The latter said: "I have two ministers from the inhabitants of the heaven and two ministers from the inhabitants of the earth. The former are Jibril and Mika'il, and the latter are Abu Bakr and `Umar."[30] He said of the latter: "These two are [my] hearing and eyesight"[31] and instructed the Companions: "Follow those that come after me: Abu Bakr and `Umar."[32]

`Umar was given the gift of true inspiration which is the characteristic of Allah's Friends named *kashf* or "unveiling." The Prophet said: "In the nations long before you were people who were spoken to [by the angels] although they were not prophets. If there is anyone of them in my Community, truly it is `Umar

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[30]Narrated from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri by al-Tirmidhi who said it is *hasan*, and from Ibn `Abbas by al-Hakim, with a chain al-Dhahabi also graded *hasan* in the *Siyar* (1/2:511).

[31]Narrated from `Abd Allah ibn Hantab by al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim (3:69), al-Qari in *al-Mirqat* (#6064), and al-Albani in *al-Silsila al-Sahiha* (#814).

[32]Narrated from Hudhayfa by Ahmad, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah with chains which al-Dhahabi said were fair *(hasan)* through Za'ida ibn Qudama.

ibn al-Khattab."[33] This narration is elucidated by the two narrations whereby "Allah has engraved truth on the tongue of `Umar and his heart"[34] and "If there were a Prophet after me verily it would be `Umar."[35] Al-Tirmidhi said that according to Ibn `Uyayna "spoken to" *(muhaddathûn)* means "made to understand" *(mufahhamûn)*, while in his narration Muslim added: "Ibn Wahb explained 'spoken to' as 'inspired' *(mulham)*." This is the majority's opinion according to Ibn Hajar who said: "'Spoken to' means 'by the angels'."[36] Al-Nawawi and Ibn Hajar said respectively in *Sharh Sahih Muslim* and *Fath al-Bari*:

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[33]Narrated from Abu Hurayra and `A'isha by Bukhari and Muslim, the latter without the words "although they were not Prophets."

[34]Narrated from Ibn `Umar, Abu Dharr, Bilal, Abu Hurayra, and other Companions by al-Tirmidhi who graded it *hasan*, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ahmad, al-Baghawi in *Sharh al-Sunna* (14:85), Ibn Abi `Asim in *al-Sunna* (p. 567 #1247-1250), Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (21:99), and Ibn Abi Shayba in *al-Musannaf* (12:21).

[35]Narrated from `Uqba ibn `Amir by Ahmad and al-Tirmidhi who graded it *hasan*, and by al-Hakim (3:85) who graded it *sahεh* as confirmed by al-Dhahabi. Also narrated from `Isma ibn Malik by al-Tabarani with a weak chain in *al-Kabir* (17:298), as stated by al-Haythami in *Majma` al-Zawa'id* (9:68) and al-Munawi in *Fayd al-Qadir*.

[36]In *Fath al-Bari* (7:62:#3689).

The scholars have differed concerning “spoken to.” Ibn Wahb said it meant “inspired” *(mulham)*. It was said also: “Those who are right, and when they give an opinion it is as if they were spoken to, and then they give their opinion. It was said also: “The angels speak to them...” Bukhari said: “Truth comes from their tongues.” This hadith contains a confirmation of the miracles of the saints *(karâmât al-awliya)*.[37]

The one among [Muslims] who is “spoken to,” if his existence is ascertained, what befalls him is not used as basis for a legal judgment, rather he is obliged to evaluate it with the Qur’an, and if it conforms to it or to the Sunna, he acts upon it, otherwise he leaves it.[38]

A claim was raised that since the hadith states “If there is anyone in my Umma, it is `Umar,” it must follow that at most the number of such inspired people is at most one, namely `Umar. Ibn Hajar replied to this with the reminder that it is wrong to think

[37]Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim* (*Kitab* 44, *Bab* 2, #2398).
[38]Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari* (7:62-63 #3689).

that other Communities had many but this Community only one. Thus what is meant by the hadith is the perfection of the quality of *ilhâm* û inspiration û in `Umar, not its lack in other Muslims, and Allah knows best.

`Umar also had the unique distinction of having his views confirmed by the revelation in the Holy Qur'an: He said three things which were confirmed by subsequent revelations:

> I concurred with my Lord in three matters: I said to the Prophet: "O Messenger of Allah! Why do we not pray behind Ibrahim's Station?" Whereupon was revealed the verse: **". . . Take as your place of worship the place where Ibrahim stood (to pray). . ."** (2:125); I said: "O Messenger of Allah! You should order your wives to cover because both the chaste and the wicked go in to see them," whereupon was revealed the verse: **"... And when you ask of them (the wives of the Prophet) anything, ask it of them from behind a curtain. . ."** (33:53) Then the Prophet's wives banded together in their jealousy over him, so I said to them: **"It may happen that his Lord, if he divorce you, will give him instead wives better than you, [submissive (to Allah),**

believing, pious, penitent, inclined to fasting, widows and maids].” (67:5) Whereupon was revealed that verse.[39]

He was unique in his power of separating truth from falsehood and the Prophet conferred on him the title of *al-Fârûq*, saying: “In truth, the devil certainly parts ways with *(layafruqu min)* `Umar.”[40] He memorized Sura al-Baqara in twelve years, and when he had learned it completely he slaughtered a camel.[41] Imam Malik stated that on his suggestion the words “I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah” were added to the *adhân*, and likewise the words “Prayer is better than Sleep” to the *adhân*

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[39]Narrated from Anas by Bukhari and Ahmad. Ibn Hibban in his *Sahih* (15:319 #6896) and al-Tahawi in *Mushkil al-Athar* (4:825) narrate a slightly different version, as do Bukhari and Ahmad. Also narrated from Ibn `Umar by Muslim and Abu Dawud al-Tayalisi in his *Musnad* but with the consultation over the prisoners of the battle of Badr as the third item. See also Ibn `Abd al-Barr’s *al-Isti`ab fi Ma`rifa al-Ashab* (2:462), Nawawi’s *Tahdhib al-Asma’* (2:8), and Suyuti’s *Tarikh al-Khulafa’*.

[40]Narrated from Burayda by Ahmad with a strong chain, al-Tirmidhi as part of a longer hadith with the wording “the devil certainly fears `Umar,” and Ibn Hibban in his *Sahih*. Al-Tirmidhi said it is *hasan sahεh gharεb* and al-Suyuti indicated that it is *sahεh* in *al-Jami` al-Saghir*.

[41]Narrated from Ibn `Umar by al-Dhahabi.

for the dawn prayer. However, the more correct report is that it is Bilal who first inserted the latter formula in the call to the dawn prayer and the Prophet retained it.[42]

`Umar ibn al-Khattab was the first Muslim ruler to establish a Public Treasury; the first Muslim ruler to levy a customs duty named *`ushr*; the first Muslim ruler to organize a census; the first Muslim ruler to strike coins; the first Muslim ruler to organize a system of canals for irrigation; and the first Muslim ruler to formally organize provinces, cities, and districts. He established the system of guest-houses and rest-houses on major routes to and from major cities. He established schools throughout the land and allocated liberal salaries for teachers. He was the first to prohibit *mut`a* or temporary marriage, according to the Prophet's earlier prohibition. He was the first to place the law of inheritance on a firm basis. He was the first to establish trusts, and the first ruler in history to separate the judiciary from the executive.

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[42]As stated by al-Zuhri in Ibn Majah's *Sunan* and Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib in Ahmad's *Musnad*, and narrated with sound chains from Bilal by Ibn Majah and from `Abd Allah ibn Zayd by Ahmad. The report that mentions `Umar is in Malik's *Muwatta'*, book of the Call to prayer, without chain.

He took pains to provide effective and speedy justice for the people. He set up an effective system of judicial administration under which justice was administered according to the principles of Islam. Qadis or judges were appointed at all administrative levels for the administration of justice and were chosen for their integrity and learning in Islamic law. High salaries were paid to them and they were appointed from the among the wealthy and those of high social standing so as not to be influenced by the social position of any litigants. The qadis were not allowed to engage in trade.

From time to time, `Umar used to issue firmans or edicts laying down the principles for the administration of justice. One of his firmans read:

> Glory to Allah! Verily Justice is an important obligation to Allah and to man. You have been charged with this responsibility. Discharge this responsibility so that you may win the approbation of Allah and the good will of the people. Treat the people equally in your presence, and in your decisions, so that the weak despair not of justice, and the high-placed harbor no hope of favoritism. The onus of proof

lies on the plaintiff, while the party who denies must do so on oath. Compromise is permissible, provided that it does not turn the unlawful into something lawful, and the lawful into something unlawful. Let nothing prevent you from changing your previous decision if after consideration you feel that the previous decision was incorrect. When you are in doubt about a question and find nothing concerning it in the Qur'an or the Sunna of the Prophet, ponder the question over and over again. Ponder over the precedents and analogous cases, and then decide by analogy. A term should be fixed for the person who wants to produce witnesses. If he proves his case, discharge for him his right. Otherwise the suit should be dismissed. All Muslims are trustworthy, except those who have been punished with flogging, those who have borne false witness, or those of doubtful integrity.

One day Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, the governor of Basra at the time, wrote to `Umar complaining that the ordinances, instructions, and letters from the Caliph were undated and therefore gave rise to problems linked to the sequence of their implementation. Because of this and other similar problems of undatedness, `Umar convened an assembly of scholars and

advisors to consider the question of calendar reforms. The deliberations of this assembly resulted in the combined opinion that Muslims should have a calendar of their own. The point that was next considered was from when should the new Muslim calendar era begin. Some suggested that the era should begin from the birth of the Prophet while others suggested that it should begin from the time of his death. `Ali suggested that the era should begin from the date the Muslims migrated from Mecca to Madina, and this was agreed upon. The next question considered was the month from which the new era should start. Some suggested that it should start from the month of Rabi` al-Awwal, some from Rajab, others from Ramadan, others from Dhu al-Hijja. `Uthman suggested that the new era should start from the month of Muharram because that was the first month in the Arabic calendar of that time. This was agreed upon. Since the Migration had taken place in the month of Rabi` al-Awwal, two months and eight days after the first of Muharram that year, the date was pushed back by two months and eight days, and the new *Hijri* calendar began with the first day of Muharram in the year of the Migration rather than from the actual date of the Migration.

`Umar was the first Muslim ruler to levy *`ushr*, the Customs or Import Duty. It was levied on the goods of the traders of other countries who chose to trade in the Muslim dominions, at up to 10% of the goods imported and on a reciprocal basis. *`Ushr* was levied in a way to avoid hardships, and only on merchandise meant for sale, not goods imported for consumption or for personal use. Goods valued at two hundred dirhams or less were not subject to *`ushr*. Instructions were issued to the officials that no personal luggage was to be searched, and *`ushr* was applied only to goods that were declared as being for the purpose of trade. The rate varied for Muslim and non-Muslim citizens of the Muslim dominions. If the former imported goods for the purpose of trade, they paid a lower rate of *`ushr*: 2½%, that is, the same rate as for *zakât*. Hence, this was regarded as part of the *zakât* and not as a separate tax. *Dhimmi*s or non-Muslim citizens of the Muslim dominions who imported goods for the purpose of trade paid a *`ushr* of 5%. In order to avoid double taxation, it was established that if the *`ushr* had been paid once on imported goods, and then these goods were subsequently taken abroad and then brought back into the Muslim dominions within the same year, no additional *`ushr* was to be levied on such re-imported goods.

Some among `Umar's innovations mentioned in Abu Hilal al-`Askari's *Kitab al-Awa'il* ("Book of Firsts") and Tabari's *Tarikh*:

1. Establishment of *Bayt al-mâl* or public treasury.
2. Establishment of courts of justice and appointment of judges.
3. The determination of the Hijra calendar which continues to this day.
4. Assumption of the title of *Amîr al-Mu'minîn*.
5. Organization of the War Department.
6. Putting army reserves on the payroll.
7. Establishment of the Land Revenue Department.
8. Survey and assessment of lands.
9. Census.
10. Building of Canals.
11. Founding of the cities of Kufa, Basra, al-Jazira, Fustat, and Musal.
12. Division of conquered countries into provinces.
13. Imposition of customs duties.

14. Taxation of the produce of the sea and appointment of officials for its collection.
15. Permission to traders of foreign lands to trade in the country.
16. Organization of jails.
17. Use of the whip.
18. Making rounds at night to inquire into the condition of the people.
19. Organization of the Police Department.
20. Establishment of military barracks at strategic points.
21. Distinction of pedigree and non-pedigree horses.
22. Employment of secret reports and emissaries.
23. Rest-houses on the way from Mecca to Madina for the comfort of travellers.
24. Provision for the care and bringing up of foundlings.
25. Organization of guest-houses in different cities.
26. The ruling that Arabs, whether Muslims or non-Muslims, could not be made slaves.
27. Stipends for the poor among the Jews and the Christians.
28. Establishment of schools.
29. Stipends for school teachers and public lecturers.

30. Persuading Abu Bakr to collect the Qur’an and execution of the work under his own care.
31. Formulation of the principle of *qiyâs* or judicial analogy.
32. More exact division of inheritance.
33. Insertion of the formula “Prayer is better than sleep” in the call to the dawn prayer. However, as stated before, the more correct report is that it is Bilal who first inserted the formula in the call to the dawn prayer and the Prophet retained it.[43]
34. Ordaining the holding of tarawih prayers in congregation.
35. Three divorces pronounced at one session declared binding
36. Provision of the punishment for drunkenness with eighty stripes
37. Levy of *zakât* on horses of merchandise

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[43]As stated by al-Zuhri in Ibn Majah’s *Sunan* and Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib in Ahmad’s *Musnad*, and narrated with sound chains from Bilal by Ibn Majah and from `Abd Allah ibn Zayd by Ahmad. The report that mentions `Umar is in Malik’s *Muwatta’* without chain.

38. Levy of *zakât* on the Christians of Bani Taghlab in lieu of *jizya*
39. Method of rnaking trusts
40. Consensus of opinion on four *takbîr*s in funeral prayers
41. Organization of sermons in mosques
42. Giving salaries to imams and *mu'adhdhin*s.
43. Provision of light in mosques at night
44. Provision of punishment for writing satires and lampoons
45. Prohibition of the mention of women's names in lyric poems although the custom was very ancient in Arabia.

`Abd Allah ibn `Isa ibn Abi Layla related: "There were two dark lines in `Umar's face marked by tears." Al-Hasan al-Basri and Hisham ibn al-Hasan narrated that `Umar sometimes lost consciousness after reciting a verse from the Qur'an, whereupon he would be taken ill and visited for days.[44] Among `Umar's sayings:

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[44]Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya* (1:88 #133) through Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shayba; Ibn al-Jawzi, *Manaqib `Umar* (p. 168); al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar*. Ibn Taymiyya claimed in his *Fatawa* and his epistle entitled *al-Sufiyya wa al-Fuqara'* that this phenomenon never took place among the Companions and he decried the

- "O Allah! Grant me to die a martyr, and make my death be in your Prophet's country."[45]

- "Take account of yourselves before you are brought to account."[46]

- Anas said: "I heard `Umar say as he was alone behind a wall: 'By Allah! You shall certainly fear Allah, O son of al-Khattab, or He will punish you!'"[47]

- Jabir said that he heard `Umar ibn al-Khattab say on the pulpit when he married Umm Kulthum, the daughter of `Ali and Fatima: "Do not disparage me [for marrying a

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propensity to faint at the hearing of the recitation of Qur'an reported from certain *Tabi`in* of Basra, and one of them was even reported to die on the spot. However, neither Ibn al-Jawzi nor al-Dhahabi questioned the authenticity of `Umar's report.

[45]Narrated from Aslam by Bukhari.

[46]Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya* (1:88 #135) and Ibn al-Jawzi, *Sifa al-Safwa*, chapter on `Umar.

[47]Ibn Qudama, *Mukhtasar Minhaj al-Qasidin li Ibn al-Jawzi* (p. 426) and al-Dhahabi.

young girl], for I heard the Prophet say: ‘On the Judgment Day every means will be cut off and every lineage severed except my lineage.’”[48] He desired to place himself in the Prophet’s lineage through this marriage due to the precedence of *Ahl al-Bayt* in the Prophet’s intercession. Umm Kulthum bore him two children, Zayd and Ruqayya.

- From `Amir ibn Rabi`a: “I saw `Umar pick up a straw from the ground and say: ‘Would that I were this straw! Would that I were nothing! Would that my mother never bore me!’”[49]

- From `Ubayd Allah ibn `Umar ibn Hafs: `Umar was seen carrying a slaughtered animal on his back. He was asked why, and he replied: “I was infatuated with myself and wanted to humble myself.”[50] Al-Hasan narrated: “`Umar

[48]Narrated by al-Tabarani. Haythami said its narrators are those of Bukhari and Muslim.
[49]Ibn `Asakir, *Tarikh Dimashq* (44:313) and al-Dhahabi.
[50]Al-Suyuti in *Tarikh al-Khulafa’* and al-Dhahabi.

gave a sermon when he was Caliph wearing a waist-wrap patched in twelve places."[51]

- As `Umar's head lay in Ibn `Umar's lap after his stabbing he said to him: "Lay my cheek on the ground." Then he said: "Woe to me, my mother's woe to me if my Lord does not grant me mercy!"[52] The next morning al-Miswar woke him for the dawn prayer. `Umar rose saying: "Yes, and there is no part in Islam for whoever leaves prayer." He prayed bleeding from his wounds.[53]

- From Malik al-Dar: The people suffered a drought in `Umar's *khilafa*, whereupon a man came to the grave of the Prophet and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Ask for rain for your Community, for verily they have but perished." After this the Prophet appeared to him in a dream and told him: "Go to `Umar and give him my greeting, then tell him that they will be watered. Tell him: Be clever!" The

[51]Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya* (1:89 #140).
[52]Ibn Sa`d, *Tabaqat* (3:344), Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya* (1:89 #137), and al-Dhahabi.
[53]Narrated from al-Miswar ibn Makhrama by Malik in his *Muwatta'*, Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (3:350-351), and Ibn al-Jawzi in *Manaqib `Umar* (p. 222).

man went and told `Umar. The latter said: “My Lord! I spare no effort except in what escapes my power.”[54]

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[54]Narrated by al-Bayhaqi in *Dala’il al-Nubuwwa* (7:47) and Ibn Abi Shayba in *al-Musannaf* with a sound *(sahεh)* chain as stated by Ibn Kathir in *al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya* (7:105) and by Ibn Hajar in *Fath al-Bari*, Book of *Istisqa’*, Chapter 3 (2:629-630). Al-Dhahabi cites it in the *Siyar* (1/2:524). Ibn Hajar identifies Malik as `Umar’s treasurer and says that the man who visited and saw the Prophet in his dream is identified as the Companion Bilal ibn al-Harith. Ibn Hajar counts this hadith among the reasons for Bukhari’s naming of the chapter “The people’s request to their leader for rain if they suffer drought” in the *Sahih,* although Bukhari does not narrate it there. Ibn Hajar also mentions it in *al-Isaba* (6:164 #8350). In his annotations on *Fath al-Bari,* the Wahhabi scholar Bin Baz condemns the act of the Companion who came to the grave, calling it “aberrant” *(munkar)* and “a means to associating partners to Allah” *(wasεla ila al-shirk),* while Albani denies the authenticity of the hadith in his booklet *al-Tawassul* on the claim that Malik al-Dar is “unknown” *(majh√l)* on the sole basis of his brief mention by Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi in *al-Jarh wa al-Ta`dil* (8:213 #14252). However, this is contradicted by the notices of three authorities which Albani did not cite: Ibn Sa`d, al-Khalili, and Ibn Hajar; furthermore, Ibn Abi Khaythama and al-Bukhari narrated from him. “Malik al-Dar [was] `Umar ibn al-Khattab’s freedman. He narrated from Abu Bakr and `Umar. He was known.” Ibn Sa`d, *Tabaqat* (5:12). “Malik al-Dar is agreed upon and the Successors have approved highly of him.” Abu Ya`la al-Khalil ibn `Abd Allah al-Khalili al-Qazwini, *Kitab al-Irshad* as quoted in `Abd Allah al-Ghumari, *Irgham al-Mubtadi`* (p. 9). “Malik ibn `Iyad [was] `Umar’s freedman. He is the one named Malik al-Dar. He has seen the Prophet and has heard narrations from Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. He has narrated

- From Mujahid: “We found that the goodness of our lives was patience.”[55]

- From `Urwa ibn al-Zubayr: “Know that greed is poverty and despair sufficiency. When a man despairs of something, he does without it.”

- From al-Sha`bi: “By Allah! My heart has softened for Allah’s sake until it became softer than butter, and it has hardened for Allah’s sake until it became harder than stone.”

- From `Awn ibn `Abd Allah ibn `Utba: “Sit with the Oft-Repentent *(al-tawwâbîn)*, for they are the softest-hearted of people.”

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from Abu Bakr and `Umar, Mu`adh, and Abu `Ubayda. From him narrated Abu Salih al-Saman and his (Malik’s) two sons `Awn and `Abd Allah. Al-Bukhari narrated from him in *al-Tarikh al-Kabir* (7:304 #10633). . . as well as Ibn Abi Khaythama. . .” Ibn Hajar, *al-Isaba* (6:164 #8350).

[55]This and the next nine reports in Abu Nu`aym’s *Hilya* 1:86-91.

From Aslam, `Umar's freedman: "Be the vessels of the Book and the well-springs of the Science, and ask Allah for your sustenance day by day."

- From Abu `Uthman al-Nahdi: "Winter is the treasure of devotees."

- From Dawud ibn `Ali: "If a sheep dies on the shore of the Euphrates I fear lest Allah ask me to account for it on the Day of Resurrection."

- From Yahya ibn Abi Kathir: "If it were announced from the heaven: 'O people! You are all entering Paradise except one,' I would fear to be he; and if it were announced: 'O people! You are all entering the Fire except one,' I would hope to be he."

- From al-Aswad ibn Hilal al-Muharibi: When `Umar was made Caliph he stood on the pulpit and said: "O people! I am going to invoke Allah, therefore say *âmîn*. O Allah! I am coarse, so make me soft, and I am stingy, so make me generous, and I am weak, so make me strong."

- From `Abd Allah ibn `Umar: "[After `Umar's death] I saw a palace in my sleep, and was told it belonged to `Umar ibn al-Khattab. Then I saw him come out of it, wearing a cover as if he had just bathed. I said: 'How did you fare?' He said: 'Well, although I would have fallen from my place if I had not found a forgiving Lord.' Then he asked: 'How long since I have left you?' I said: 'Twelve years.' He said: 'I only just finished rendering account.'"

`Umar was the closed door between the Prophet's Community and the onset of dissension. His death is one of the earliest signs of the Hour. One day he asked Hudhayfa about the "dissension that shall surge like the waves of the sea" according to the Prophet's own terms. Hudhayfa answered: "You need not worry about it, for between you and it there is a gate closed shut." `Umar said: "Will the gate be opened or broken?" Hudhayfa said: "Broken!" `Umar replied: "That is more appropriate than that it be let open." The narrator [Abu Wa'il] said: "We feared to ask

Hudhayfa who was that gate, so we sent Masruq to ask him and he said: That gate was `Umar."[56]

Main sources: Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya al-Awliya'* 1:73-92; al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* 1/2:509-565 #3; Shibli Nu`mani, *`Umar The Great* 2:336-338.

[56] Narrated from Abu Wa'il Shaqiq ibn Salama by Bukhari and Muslim.

`UTHMAN IBN `AFFAN

Uthman ibn Affaan ibn Abi al-`As ibn Umayya ibn `Abd Shams, Abu `Amr, Abu `Abd Allah, Abu Layla al-Qurashi al-Umawi (d. 35), the Prophet's Friend, *Amîr al-Mu'minîn*, the third of the four Rightly-Guided Successors of the Prophet and third of the Ten promised Paradise. He is named *Dhu al-Nûrayn* or "Possessing Two Lights," a reference to his marriage with two daughters of the Prophet, Ruqayya then Umm Kulthum. He is among those who emigrated twice: once to Abyssinia, and again to Madina. He gathered together the Qur'an which he had read in its entirety before the Prophet. During his tenure as Caliph, Armenia, Caucasia, Khurasan, Kirman, Sijistan, Cyprus, and much of North Africa were added to the dominions of Islam. He related 146 hadiths from the Prophet. Among the Companions who narrated from him in the Nine Books are Anas, Abu Hurayra, Jundub, `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, `Abd Allah ibn `Abbas, `Abd Allah ibn `Umar. A host of prominent Followers narrated from him, among them al-Zuhri, Ibn al-Musayyib, al-Dahhak, and `Alqama.

> `Uthman was extremely wealthy and generous. When he heard the Prophet say: "Whoever equips the army of al-`Usra,[57] Paradise is for him," he brought the Prophet a thousand gold dinars which he poured into his lap. The Prophet picked them up with his hand and said repeatedly: "Nothing shall harm `Uthman

[57]For the campaign of Tabuk on the border of al-Sham.

after what he did today."[58] It is also narrated that he equipped the army of al-`Usra with seven hundred ounces of gold,[59] or seven hundred and fifty camels and fifty horses.[60]

The Prophet said: "The most compassionate of my Community towards my Community is Abu Bakr; the staunchest in Allah's Religion is `Umar; and the most truthful in his modesty is `Uthman."[61] The pebbles were heard by Abu Dharr glorifying Allah in the hands of the Prophet, Abu Bakr, `Umar, and `Uthman.[62] The Prophet particularly praised `Uthman for his

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[58]Narrated from `Abd al-Rahman ibn Samura by Ahmad and al-Tirmidhi who graded it *hasan gharεb*. Also narrated from `Uthman by Bukhari with a different wording.

[59]Narrated from `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf by Abu Ya`la in his *Musnad* and Ibn `Asakir in *Tarikh Dimashq* (39:69).

[60]Narrated from al-Hasan al-Basri by Ibn `Asakir in *Tarikh Dimashq* (39:70).

[61]Part of a longer hadith narrated with sound chains from Anas by al-Tirmidhi who graded it *hasan sahεh*, Ibn Majah, and Ahmad.

[62]Narrated from Abu Dharr by al-Tabarani in *al-Awsat* with a sound chain as stated by al- Haythami in *Majma` al-Zawa'id* in the chapter entitled *`Alamat al-Nubuwwa* ("The Marks of Prophethood"): "The Prophet took pebbles and they glorified Allah in his hand so that a hum was heard coming from them like the buzzing of bees. He put them down and they became silent. Then Abu Bakr picked them up, etc."

modesty and said: “Shall I not feel bashful before a man when even the angels feel bashful before him?”[63]

He was humble and was seen at the time of his caliphate sleeping alone in the mosque, wrapped in a blanket with no one around him, and riding on a mule with his son Na’il behind him.

It is related through several sound chains that `Uthman recited the Qur’an in a single *rak`a*. Ibrahim ibn Rustum al-Marwazi said: “Four are the Imams that recited the entire Qur’an in a single *rak`a*: `Uthman ibn `Affan, Tamim al-Dari, Sa`id ibn Jubayr, and Abu Hanifa.”[64] Ibn al-Mubarak also narrated that `Uthman used to fast all year round. `Ali ibn Abi Talib said: “`Uthman was one of those who were **‘mindful of their duty and [did] good works, and again [were] mindful of [their] duty, and [believed], and once again [were] mindful of their duty, and did right. Allah loves those who do good.’** (5:93)”[65]

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[63]Narrated from `A’isha by Muslim and Ahmad.
[64]Cited by al-Khatib in *Tarikh Baghdad* (13:356), al-Dhahabi in *Manaqib Abi Hanifa* (p. 22), and al-Suyuti in *Tabyid al-Sahifa* (p. 94-95).
[65]Narrated from al-Hasan by Abu Nu`aym with a sound chain in the *Hilya* (1:93 #155).

Ibn `Umar said that `Uthman was meant by the verse **“Is he who pays adoration in the watches of the night, prostrate and standing, bewaring of the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord. . .”** (39:9).[66]

Anas narrated: When Hudhayfa campaigned with the people of Iraq and al-Sham in Armenia, the Muslims contended with regard to the Qur’an in a reprehensible manner. Hudhayfa came to `Uthman and told him: “O Commander of the Believers, rescue this Community before they differ in the Qur’an the way Christians and Jews differed in the Books.” `Uthman was alarmed at this and sent word to Hafsa the Mother of the Believers: “Send me all the volumes in which the Qur’an has been written down.” When she did, `Uthman ordered Zayd ibn Thabit, Sa`id ibn al-`As, `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, and `Abd Al-Rahman ibn al-Harith ibn Hisham to copy them into volumes. He said: “If you all differ with Zayd concerning the Arabic, then write it in the dialect of Quraysh, for truly the Qur’an was only revealed in their dialect.”[67] There is Consensus around the

[66]Narrated from Yahya al-Bakka’ by Abu Nu`aym with a weak chain.
[67]Narrated from Anas by al-Bukhari and al-Tirmidhi who graded it *hasan sahεh*.

integral contents of `Uthman's volume.[68] This means that one who denies or questions it in whole or in part has left Islam.

`Uthman was neither tall nor short, extremely handsome, brunet, large-jointed, wide-shouldered, with a large beard which he dyed yellow and long hair which reached to his shoulders, and gold-braced teeth. `Abd Allah ibn Hazm said: "I saw `Uthman, and I never saw man nor woman handsomer of face than him."

The plot to kill `Uthman marked the onset of Dissension *(fitna)* in the Community. Together with deadly division, the great sign of this Dissension was the beginning of falsehood. The timing of the spread of falsehood was foretold by the Prophet in the hadith: "I entrust to you the well-being of my Companions, and that of those that come after them. Then falsehood will spread."[69] To counter this, the sciences of hadith and hadith criticism were innovated within the half-century which followed `Uthman's death in order to sift true Prophetic and Companion-

[68]As stipulated by al-Qadi `Iyad in al-Nawawi's *Sharh Sahih Muslim* (4:109) and by Ibn Hajar in *Fath al-Bari* (Cairo ed. 12:131).
[69]Narrated from `Umar by al-Tirmidhi who graded it *hasan sahεh gharεb,* Ahmad with a sound chain, and Ibn Majah, as part of a longer hadith.

reports from false ones. This was done by verifying the authenticity of transmission chains *(isnâds)* embodied in the honesty and competence of transmitters, and by examining the conditions and contents of transmission in their minutest historical, linguistic, and doctrinal details. Ibn Sirin (d. 110) said: "We used to accept as true what we heard, then lies spread and we began to say: Name your transmitters."[70] Confirming this is al-Hasan al-Basri's (d. 110) reaction to someone who requested his *isnâd*: "O man! I neither lie nor was ever called a liar!"[71] Later scholars such as Ibn al-Mubarak (d. 181) declared: "*Isnâd* is an integral part of the Religion, otherwise anyone can say anything."[72]

The principle of authentication was founded by the Prophet himself and used by the Companions. This is proved by the Prophet's questioning of the man who said he had seen the new moon of Ramadan: "Do you bear witness that there is no God except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah?"

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[70]Narrated by Muslim in the introduction to his *Sahih*.
[71]Al-Mizzi, *Tahdhib al-Kamal* (1:259).
[72]Narrated by Muslim in the introduction to his *Sahih* and al-Khatib in his *Tarikh* (6:166).

When he replied in the affirmative, the Prophet accepted his news.[73] Similarly, Ibn `Abbas said: "If a trustworthy source tells us of a *fatwa* by `Ali, we do not seek any further concerning it."[74] This shows that they already distinguished between true and dubious sources. Furthermore, all the Companions are considered trustworthy sources according to Allah's saying: **"You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind"** (3:110) and several other verses and hadiths to that effect. This evidence was listed by al-Khatib in *al-Kifaya* and Ibn Hajar in *al-Isaba*.[75]

The Prophet spoke of `Uthman's forthcoming martyrdom on numerous occasions:

- "Give him [`Uthman] the tidings of Paradise after a trial that shall befall him."[76]

[73]Narrated with a fair chain from Ibn `Abbas by al-Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, and al-Darimi.
[74]All three reports are narrated by Ibn Sa`d in the *Tabaqat* (2:339), Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:39-40), and al-Suyuti in *Tarikh al-Khulafa'*.
[75]Al-Khatib, *al-Kifaya* (1358H ed. p. 46-49); Ibn Hajar, *al-Isaba* (1:10-11).
[76]Narrated from Abu Musa al-Ash`ari by Bukhari and Muslim.

- "A dissension shall surge like so many bull's horns. At that time, he [indicating a man wearing a veil] and whoever is with him are on the side of right." Ka`b ibn Murra al-Bahzi then ran to the man, lifted his veil, and turned him towards the Prophet saying: "Him, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet said yes. It was `Uthman ibn `Affan.[77]

- `Uthman said: "The Prophet took a covenant from me [not to fight at the time of my martyrdom] and I shall fulfill it."[78]

- "O `Uthman! It may be that Allah shall vest you with a shirt. If they demand that you remove it, do not remove it."[79]

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[77]Narrated from Ka`b ibn Murra al-Bahzi by Ahmad with several fair *(hasan)* chains.
[78]Narrated from Abu Sahla, `Uthman's freedman, by al-Tirmidhi Ahmad, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, al-Hakim, and Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (3:66) all with sound chains.
[79]Narrated from `A'isha with sound chains by Ibn Hibban, Ahmad, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim. Al-Tirmidhi's narration *(hasan gharεb)* adds: "The Prophet repeated it

Ibn `Umar said: "As `Uthman was delivering a sermon, Jahjah al-Ghafari walked up to him, snatched his stick, and broke it on his knee. A shard of wood entered his thigh and it got gangrened and was amputated. Then he died within the year.[80] Al-Qadi `Iyad relates in his book *al-Shifa'*, chapter entitled "Esteem for the things and places connected with the Prophet," that this staff had belonged to the Prophet.

`Abd Allah ibn Salam said to the Egyptians at the time they were besieging the Commander of the Believers `Uthman ibn `Affan: "Never did Allah's sword not remain sheathed from harming you since the Prophet came to it until this very day."[81] Yazid ibn Abi Habib said: "I have heard that most of those that rode to kill `Uthman were later seized by demonic possession." Al-Dhahabi mentioned that `Ali had pronounced a curse on `Uthman's killers. One of the reasons for the climate of hatred

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three times." Another sound version in Ahmad states: "If the hypocrites ask that you remove it. . ."

[80]Narrated by al-Tabari in his *Tarikh* (4:366) and al-Dhahabi.

[81]Part of a longer hadith narrated by Tabarani with a sound chain as stated by Haythami in *Majma` al-Zawa'id*.

stirred up against the Caliph was the grievance of some parties from Egypt and Iraq that `Uthman was favoring his relatives among the Banu Umayya with public offices and demanded that he remove them.

Ibn al-Musayyib related that a group of seven hundred Egyptians came to complain to `Uthman about their governor Ibn Abi Sarh's tyranny, so `Uthman said: "Chose someone to govern you." They chose Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, so `Uthman wrote credentials for him and they returned. On their way back, at three days' distance from Madina, a black slave caught up with them with the news that he carried orders from `Uthman to the governor of Egypt. They searched him and found a message from `Uthman to Ibn Abi Sarh ordering the death of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and some of his friends. They returned to Madina and besieged `Uthman who acknowledged that the camel, the slave, and the seal on the letter belonged to him, but he swore that he had never written nor ordered the letter to be written. It was discovered that the letter had been hand-written by Marwan ibn al-Hakam. `Uthman was besieged for twenty-two days during which he refused both to give up Marwan and to resign. He was

killed on the last day of Dhu al-Hijja, on the day of *Jum`a*, by several men who had crept into his house.

Ibn `Umar related from `Uthman that the previous night the latter had seen the Prophet in his dream telling him: “Be strong! Verily you shall break your fast with us tomorrow night.” When his assailants came in they found him reading the Qur’an. `Uthman was first stabbed in the head with an arrow-head, then a man placed the point of his sword against his belly, whereupon his wife Na’ila tried to prevent him with her hand, losing several fingers. Then `Uthman and Na’ila’s servant were killed as the latter fought back. She ran out of the house screaming for help and the killers dispersed. It is narrated that `Uthman was killed as he was reading the verse **“And Allah will suffice you for defense against them. He is the Hearer, the Knower.”** (2:137) Several reports state that at the time of `Uthman’s siege and death Zayd ibn Thabit had marshalled three hundred *Ansâr* in his defense together with Abu Hurayra, Ibn `Umar, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, but `Uthman forbade all of them to fight.

Among `Uthman’s sayings:

- “If I were between Paradise and the Fire, unsure where I will be sent, I would choose to be turned into ash before finding out where I was bound.”

- “I swear by Allah that I never committed fornication in the Time of Ignorance nor in Islam. Islam only increased me in modesty.”

- His servant Hani’ narrated: “Whenever `Uthman stood before a grave he wept until his beard was wet. He was asked: ‘You have seen battle and death without a tear, and you cry for this?’ He said: ‘The grave is the first abode of the hereafter. Whoever is saved from it, what follows is easier; whoever is not saved from it, what follows is harder. The Prophet said: “I have not seen anything more frightful than the punishment in the grave.”’”[82] `Uthman also related from the Prophet that whenever the latter finished burying someone, he would stand by the grave

[82]Narrated from `Abd Allah ibn Abi al-Jad`a’ by al-Tirmidhi *(hasan sahεh gharεb)*, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim *(sahεh)*, Ahmad, and al-Darimi.

and say: "All of you, ask Allah to forgive your brother and make him steadfast, for he is now being questioned."[83]

The Prophet said: "More men will enter Paradise through the intercession of a certain man than there are people in the tribes of Rabi`a and Mudar." The elders considered that this was `Uthman ibn `Affan.[84]

Main sources: Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya al-Awliya'* 1:92-100 #3; al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* 1/2: 566-614 #4.

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[83]Narrated by Abu Dawud, al-Bayhaqi in *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (4:56), and al-Hakim (1:370).
[84]Narrated from Abu Umama by al-Tirmidhi *(hasan)*, Ibn Majah, and al-Hakim.

`ALI IBN ABI TALIB

Ali bin Abi Talib `Abd Manaf ibn `Abd al-Muttalib ibn Hashim ibn `Abd Manaf, Abu al-Hasan al-Qurashi al-Hashimi (d. 40), *Amîr al-Mu'minîn*, the first male believer in Islam, the Prophet's standard-bearer in battle, the Door of the City of Knowledge, the most judicious of the Companions, and the "Possessor of a wise heart and enquiring tongue." The Prophet nicknamed him *Abu Turâb* or Father of Dust.[85] His mother was Fatima bint Asad, whom the Prophet called his own mother and at whose grave he made a remarkable intercession.[86] He accepted Islam when he was eight, or nine, or fourteen, depending on the narrations, but it is established from Ibn

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[85]Sahl ibn Sa`d said that `Ali liked to be called by that patronym. Its story is related in Bukhari and Muslim.

[86]In the hadith which partly reads: "O Allah who lives and never dies, who quickens and puts to death! Forgive the sins of my mother Fatima bint Asad, make wide the place wherein she enters through the intercession of me, Your Prophet, and the Prophets who came before me. For You are the most merciful of those capable of having mercy." Al-Tabarani relates it in *al-Kabir* and *al-Awsat*. Ibn Hibban and al-Hakim declare it sound. Ibn Abi Shayba on the authority of Jabir relates a similar narrative. Similar also is what Ibn `Abd al-Barr on the authority of Ibn `Abbas and Abu Nu`aym in his *Hilya* on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik relate, as al-Suyuti mentioned in the *Jami` al-Kabir*. Al-Haythami said in *Majma` al-Zawa'id*: "Tabarani's chain contains Rawh ibn Salah who has some weakness but Ibn Hibban and al-Hakim declared him trustworthy. The rest of its sub-narrators are the men of sound hadith." Imam al-Kawthari says about this hadith in his *Maqalat* (p. 410): "It provides textual evidence whereby there is no difference between the living and the dead in the context of using a means *(tawassul)*, and this is explicit *tawassul* through the Prophets, while the hadith of Abu Sa`id al-Khudri 'O Allah, I ask You by the right of those who ask You,' constitutes *tawassul* through the generality of Muslims, both the living and the dead."

`Abbas that he was the first male Muslim after the Prophet, Khadija being the first Muslim. He was killed at age fifty-eight. From him narrated Abu Bakr, `Umar, his sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn, Ibn `Abbas, `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, and countless others.

`Ali was a skilled and fearless fighter, and the Prophet gave him his standard to carry on the day of Badr and in subsequent battles. At the same time he was the repository of Prophetic wisdom among the Companions. The latter, when asked about difficult legal rulings, deferred to others the responsibility of answering, while `Ali, alone among them, used to say: "Ask me."[87] `Umar said: "I seek refuge in Allah from a problem which Abu al-Hasan cannot solve." Similarly `A'isha said: "He is the most knowledgeable about the Sunna among those who remain," and Ibn `Abbas: "If a trustworthy source tells us of a *fatwa* by `Ali, we do not seek any further concerning it."[88] Sulayman al-Ahmusi narrated from his father that `Ali said: "By Allah! No verse was ever revealed except I knew the reason for which it was

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[87]Narrated from Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib by Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:40-41), Ibn `Asakir in *Tarikh Dimashq* (42:399), and al-Suyuti in *Tarikh al-Khulafa'*.
[88]All three reports are narrated by Ibn Sa`d in the *Tabaqat* (2:339), Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:39-40), and al-Suyuti in *Tarikh al-Khulafa'*.

revealed and in what place and concerning whom. Verily my Lord has bestowed upon me a wise heart and a speaking tongue."[89] At the same time `Ali humbly declared: "What cools my liver most, if I am asked something I know not, is to say: 'Allah knows best'."[90]

Imam Ahmad said: "There is no Companion concerning whom are reported as many merits as `Ali ibn Abi Talib."[91] Following are some of the hadiths to that effect.

- On the eve of the campaign of Khaybar, the Prophet said: "I shall give the standard to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger, and whom Allah loves and also His Messenger." `Umar said: "I never liked to be entrusted leadership before that day." The next day the Prophet summoned `Ali and gave him the flag.[92]

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[89]Narrated by Ibn Sa`d in the *Tabaqat* (2:338), Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:36-37), and Abu Nu`aym in the *Hilya* with the wording: "And an enquiring tongue."
[90]Narrated from Abu al-Bakhtari by al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar* (1/2:633).
[91]Narrated by al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak* (3:107).
[92]Narrated from Abu Hurayra and others by Bukhari and Muslim.

- Salama ibn `Amr narrated that the day of Khaybar, the Prophet summoned `Ali who came led by the hand, as he was suffering from inflammation of the eyes. The Prophet then blew on his eyes and gave him the flag.[93] Another version states that Ibn Abi Layla told his father to ask `Ali why he wore summer clothes in winter and winter clothes in summer. `Ali said: "The day of Khaybar the Prophet summoned me when my eyes were sore. I said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah! I have ophtalmia.' He blew on my eyes and said: 'O Allah! remove from him hot and cold.' I never felt hot nor cold after that day."[94]

- The Prophet left `Ali behind in the campaign of Tabuk. The latter said: "O Messenger of Allah! Are you leaving me behind with the women and children?" The Prophet replied: "Are you not happy to stand next to me like Harun next to Musa, save that there is no Prophet after me?"[95]

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[93]Narrated by Muslim.
[94]Narrated from `Abd Allah ibn Abi Layla by Ahmad and Ibn Majah with weak chains.
[95]Narrated from Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas by Bukhari and Muslim.

- The Prophet said: "I am the city of knowledge and `Ali is its gate." Another version states: "I am the house of wisdom and `Ali is its gate."[96]

- When Allah revealed the verse: **"Come! We will summon our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves, then we**

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[96]From the *Reliance of the Traveller* p. 954-957: (`Ali Qari:) The Hadith "I am the city of knowledge and `Ali is its gate" was mentioned by Tirmidhi... [who] said it was unacknowledgeable. Bukhari also said this, and said that it was without legitimate claim to authenticity. Ibn Ma`in said that it was a baseless lie, as did Abu Hatim and Yahya ibn Sa`id. Ibn Jawzi recorded it in his book of hadith forgeries, and was confirmed by Dhahabi, and others in this. Ibn Daqiq al-`Id said: "This hadith is not confirmed by scholars, and is held by some to be spurious." Daraqutni stated that it was uncorroborated. Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalani was asked about it and answered that it was well authenticated *(hasan)*, not rigorously authenticated *(sahεh)*, as Hakim had said, but not a forgery *(mawd√`)*, as Ibn al-Jawzi had said. This was mentioned by Suyuti. The hadith master Abu Sa`id al-`Ala'i said: "The truth is that the Hadith is well authenticated *(hasan)*, in view of its multiple means of transmission, being neither rigorously authenticated *(sahεh)* nor weak *(da`εf)*, much less a forgery" (*Risala al-Mawdu`at*, 26)." See also Ibn al-Mubarak's *al-Zuhd* (p. 314), *Mishkat al-Masabih* (#6087), *Ithaf al-Sada al-Muttaqin* (6:244), and *Hilya al-Awliya'* (1:103 #193).

will pray humbly and invoke the curse of Allah upon those who lie” (3:61), the Prophet summoned `Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husayn, and said: “O Allah! These are my Family.”[97]

- The Prophet said: “Anyone whose protecting friend *(mawla)* I am, `Ali is his protecting friend.”[98] `Umar said: “Congratulations, O `Ali! You have become the protecting friend of every single believer.”[99]

- The Prophet said: “`Ali is part of me and I am part of `Ali! No-one conveys something on my behalf except I or

[97]Narrated from Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas by Muslim, Ahmad, al-Tirmidhi *(hasan sahîh gharîb)*, Ahmad, and al-Hakim.

[98]Narrated from Zayd ibn Arqam or Abu Sariha from al-Tirmidhi who said it is *hasan gharεb*, and from Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas by Ibn Majah. Ahmad narrated something similar, as well as al-Tabarani in *al-Kabir*, al-Hakim 3:110, 134, 371), al-Bazzar and Abu Ya`la in their *Musnad*s, and al-Tahawi in *Mushkil al-Athar* (2:307). Al-Dhahabi declared the hadith sound in the *Siyar* (1/2:621), but al-Zayla`i declared it weak in *Nasb al-Raya* (1:189).

[99]Narrated from al-Bara’ by `Abd al-Razzaq and Ibn Abi Shayba in their *Musannaf*s.

he."[100] The context of this hadith was the conveyance of Sura *Bara'a* to the Quraysh and the rescinding of the Prophet's pact with them.[101] The scholars have explained that the Prophet's phrase "X is part of me and I am part of X" is a hyperbole signifying oneness of path and agreement in obeying Allah. The Prophet said that phrase also about the following: the Companion Julaybib who was found dead after a battle next to seven enemies killed by him;[102] the Ash`aris;[103] and the Banu Najya.[104]

- Some people complained to the Prophet about `Ali, whereupon he stood and said: "Do not accuse `Ali of anything! By Allah, he is truly a little rough *(la'ukhayshan)* in Allah's cause."[105]

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[100]Narrated from Hubshi ibn Janada with a fair chain by al-Tirmidhi *(hasan sahεh gharεb)*, Ahmad, al-Nasa'i in *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, and Ibn Majah.
[101]Al-Mubarakfuri, *Tuhfa al-Ahwadhi* (10:152).
[102]Narrated by Nadla ibn `Ubayd by Muslim.
[103]Narrated from Abu Musa al-Ash`ari by Bukhari and Muslim.
[104]Narrated from Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas by Ahmad with a weak chain.
[105]Narrated from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri by Ahmad and al-Hakim (3:134) with a sound chain as confirmed by al-Dhahabi.

- When the Prophet sent `Ali to Yemen the latter said: "O Messenger of Allah, you are sending me to people who are older than me so that I judge between them!" The Prophet said: "Go, for verily Allah shall empower your tongue and guide your heart." `Ali said: "After that I never felt doubt as to what judgment I should pass between two parties."[106]

- The Prophet said: "The most compassionate of my Community towards my Community is Abu Bakr; the staunchest in Allah's Religion is `Umar; the most truthful in his modesty is `Uthman, and the best in judgment is `Ali."[107] `Umar said: "`Ali is the best in judgment among us, and Ubayy is the most proficient at the Qur'anic readings."[108] Ibn Mas`ud similarly said: "We used to say

[106]Narrated by Ahmad with two sound chains. One version lacks `Ali's final words.
[107]Part of a longer hadith narrated with two sound chains from Anas by Ibn Majah.
[108]Narrated from Ibn `Abbas by Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (2:339), Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:39-41), Ibn `Asakir in *Tarikh Dimashq* (42:404), and Abu Nu`aym in the *Hilya*.

that the best in judgment among the people of Madina was `Ali."[109] It is a measure of al-Hasan al-Basri's greatness that `Ali once followed his recommendation in a judicial case.[110]

- `Amr ibn Sha's al-Aslami complained about `Ali upon returning from Yemen where he had accompanied him. News of it reached the Prophet who said: "O `Amr! By Allah, you have done me harm." `Amr said: "I seek refuge in Allah from harming you, O Messenger of Allah!" He said: "But you did. Whoever harms `Ali harms me."[111] The Prophet also used the terms "Whoever harms X has harmed me" about his uncle al-`Abbas.[112]

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[109]Narrated by al-Hakim (3:135), Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (2:338), and Ibn `Asakir (42:404).

[110]As narrated by `Abd al-Razzaq in his *Musannaf* (7:412). Cf. Muhammad R. al-Qal`aji, *Mawsu`a Fiqh al-Hasan al-Basri* (1:21).

[111]Narrated from `Amr ibn Sha's by Ahmad, Ibn Abi Shayba in his *Musannaf* (12:75), and al-Hakim (3:122) with a sound chain as confirmed by al-Dhahabi and al-Haythami.

[112]As narrated from `Abd al-Muttalib ibn Rabi`a by Ahmad and al-Tirmidhi *(hasan sahεh)*.

- Umm Salama said to Abu `Abd Allah al-Jadali:[113] “Is Allah’s Messenger being insulted among you?! [in Kufa]” He said: “Allah forbid!” She said: “I heard Allah’s Messenger say: ‘Whoso insults `Ali, insults me.’”[114]

- `Ali said: “In truth the Prophet has made a covenant with me saying: ‘None loves you except a believer, and none hates you except a hypocrite.”[115] Abu Sa`id al-Khudri subsequently said: “In truth we recognized the hypocrites by their hatred for `Ali.”[116] Jabir said: “We did not know the hypocrites of this Community except by their hatred for `Ali.”[117]

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[113]Abu `Abd Allah al-Jadali is `Abd ibn `Abd, a *TΓbi`i* from Kufa.
[114]Narrated by Ahmad and al-Hakim (3:121) with a sound chain as stated by the latter, al-Haythami, and al-Suyuti.
[115]Narrated by Muslim, al-Nasa’i, and Ahmad.
[116]Narrated by al-Tirmidhi with two chains, one very weak, and one sound to al-A`mash.
[117]Cited by Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:46-47) and al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar* (1/2:625).

`Ali ibn Abi Talib

The innovations of those who bore excessive love and admiration for `Ali appeared in his own lifetime and he himself fought them in word and deed. To those that claimed that the Prophet had appointed him as successor after him he said: "In truth, Allah's Messenger did not appoint any successor"[118] and: "The Prophet was taken from us, then Abu Bakr was made the successor, so he did as the Prophet had done and according to his path until Allah took him from us; then `Umar was made the successor, so he did as the Prophet had done and according to his path until Allah took him from us."[119] To those that claimed that he deserved the Caliphate better than Abu Bakr and `Umar he said: "The best of this Community after its Prophet are Abu Bakr

[118]Cited by al-Bukhari in *al-Du`afa' al-Saghir* (p. 11-12), where he relates it as authentic from both `Umar and `Ali. It is also related that on the day of the battle of the Camel `Ali said: "In truth, Allah's Messenger did not give us a covenant concerning leadership [after him], but we did see something on our own [concerning his preference]. Then Abu Bakr was made to follow him, and he kept to a righteous path, then `Umar, and he kept to a righteous path, then the Religion was stabbed in the throat [with the killing of `Uthman]." Narrated from Sa`id ibn `Amr with a weak chain by Ahmad, al-Lalika'i, and others, but it is strengthened by the following narration in Ahmad.

[119]Narrated from `Abd Khayr by Ahmad with two sound chains, as stated by Ahmad Shakir, in his *Musnad* (2:54-55 #1055, 2:56 #1059).

and `Umar."[120] To those that either hated him or overly loved him `Ali said: "Two types of people shall perish concerning me: a hater who forges lies about me, and a lover who over-praises me."[121] To those that claimed that he or his family possessed other than the Qur'an which all Muslims had he said: "Whoever claims that we have something which we read other than the Qur'an has lied."[122] Finally, when a group of people came to him

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[120]This is a mass-narrated *(mutawΓtir)* saying from `Ali according to al-Dhahabi, spoken from the pulpit in Kufa and narrated from Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya by Bukhari in his *Sahih* and Abu Dawud with a sound chain; Wahb al-Suwa'i, `Alqama ibn Qays, Shurayh, and `Abd Khayr by Ahmad in his *Musnad*, each through several chains; from `Abd Allah ibn Salama by Ibn Majah with a fair chain; and from Shurayh by Ibn Shadhan, al-Khatib, Ibn Abi Shayba, al-Lalika'i, Ibn Mandah, Ibn `Asakir, and others. See also *Kashf al-Khafa'* under the hadith: "I am the city of knowledge and `Ali is its gate."

[121]Narrated from al-Harith ibn `Abd Allah by Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:37), al- Nuwayri in *Nihaya al-Arb* (20:5), and in Abu al-Hadid's *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha* (1:372).

[122]Narrated from Yazid ibn Sharik by Muslim. Bukhari narrates something similar from Abu Juhayfa. The rest of the hadith states: "Except for this notebook which contains information about the ages of camels [in the payment of *zakΓt*] and compensations." `Ali indicated a notebook *(sahεfa)* which contained hadiths and *fiqh* notes. Al-Bukhari deduced from this hadith, among others, that some of the Companions kept a written record of some of the Prophet's hadiths and of their explanations.

saying: "You are He, you are our Lord! *(anta Hû anta Rabbuna)*" he had them executed and then ordered the bodies burnt.[123]

When `Ali was given allegiance as Caliph he moved from Madina to Kufa in Iraq and made it his capital. His tenure lasted five years (35-40) marred by three great dissensions which tore apart the fabric of the Muslim Community: the battle of the Camel (year 36) against the party of `A'isha the Mother of the Believers, the battle of Siffin (year 37) aganst the party of Mu`awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, and the campaign against the *Khawârij* in the following two years, until he was assassinated by one of them in Kufa as he came out for the dawn prayer. The pretext for the meeting of the armies on the day of the Camel and the day of Siffin was the demand for `Uthman's killers on the part of `A'isha and Mu`awiya, but the winds of war were fanned by sowers of discord from inside all three camps until events escaped the control of the Companions. It is related that `Ali often expressed astonishment at the dissension and opposition that surrounded him. The Prophet had predicted these events, notably

[123]Narrated from `Uthman ibn Abi `Uthman by Ibn `Asakir in *Tarikh Dimashq* (42:476) and al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar* (1/2:631).

the battle of the Camel with the words: “One of you women shall come out riding a long-haired camel, and the dogs of Haw’ab [between Mecca and Basra] will bark at her. Many shall be killed to her right and her left, and she shall escape after near death.”[124] At any rate, *Ahl al-Sunna* adopted as theirs the position taken by one of the *Salaf* who said: “Those from whose blood Allah has kept our swords pure, we shall not soil our tongues with their slander.” The most reliable book written on the divergences of the Companions is Abu Bakr ibn al-`Arabi’s (d. 543) *al-`Awasim min al-Qawasim fi Tahqiq Mawaqif al-Sahaba Ba`da Wafati al-Nabi Sallallahu `Alayhi wa Sallam.*

Another innovation fought by `Ali was that of the *Khawârij* or “Seceders,” also known as *Hurûriyya* after the village of Hurur, near Kufa, where they set up military quarters. They were originally a group of up to twenty thousand pious worshippers and memorizers of the Qur’an *(`ubbâd wa qurrâ’)* who were part of `Ali’s army but walked out on him after he accepted arbitration

[124]Narrated from Ibn `Abbas by Ibn Abi Shayba in his *Musannaf* and al-Bazzar in his *Musnad* with a sound chain as stated by al-Haythami. See Albani’s *Silsila Sahiha* (#474).

in the crises with Mu`awiya ibn Abi Sufyan and `A'isha the Mother of the Believers. Their strict position was on the basis of the verse **"The decision rests with Allah only"** (6:57, 12:40, 12:67). `Ali said: "A word of truth by which falsehood is sought!" He sent them the expert interpreter of the Qur'an among the Companions, Ibn `Abbas, who recited to them the verses **"The judge is to be two men among you known for justice"** (5:95) and **"Appoint an arbiter from his folk and an arbiter from her folk"** (4:35) then said: "Allah has thereby entrusted arbitration to men, although if He had wished to decide He would have decided. And is the sanctity of the Community of Muhammad not greater than that of a man and a woman?" Hearing this, four thousand of the *Khawârij* came back with him while the rest either left the field or persisted in their enmity and were killed in the battles of Nahrawan (year 38) and al-Nukhayla (year 39).

The Prophet had predicted that `Ali would fight the *Khawârij* with the words: "In truth there will be, among you, one who shall fight over the interpretation of the Qur'an just as I fought over its revelation." Abu Bakr and `Umar asked: "Am I he?" The Prophet said: "No, it is the one who is mending the shoes." He had given

his shoes to `Ali to mend.[125] The Prophet also predicted `Ali's martyrdom with the words: "This shall be dyed red from this" and he pointed to `Ali's beard and head respectively.[126]

The *Khawârij* are the first doctrinal innovators in Islam. They considered all sinners apostates, as well as all those who opposed them. By this *takfîr*, they justified to themselves the killing and spoliation of Muslims including women and children. Muslims who joined them were forced to first declare themselves disbelievers then enter Islam again. They distinguished themselves by shaving their heads out of austerity, a practice

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[125]Narrated from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri by Imam Ahmad with a sound chain as stated by al-Haythami in *Majma` al-Zawa'id* (9:133), Ibn Hibban with a sound chain, as stated by Shu`ayb al-Arna'ut, in his *Sahih* (15:385 #6937), al-Hakim (3:122) who declared it *sahεh*, while al-Dhahabi said in *Talkhis al-`Ilal al-Mutanahiya* (fº 18): "This hadith has a good chain." Also narrated by al-Baghawi in *Sharh al-Sunna* (10:233), Abu Ya`la in his *Musnad* (#1086), Sa`id ibn Mansur in his *Sunan*, Ibn Abi Shayba in his *Musannaf* (12:64), Abu Nu`aym in *al-Hilya*, and al-Bayhaqi in *Dala'il al-Nubuwwa* (6:435) and *Shu`ab al-Iman*.

[126]Narrated from Tha`laba ibn Yazid al-Hummani by Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (3:34), Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:60), and al-Nuwayri in *Nihaya al-Arb* (20:211). Also see Ahmad, *al-Zuhd* (p. 165), al-Hakim (3:143), Ibn al-Jawzi's *Sifa al-Safwa* (1:332), and Abu Nu`aym's *Hilya*.

which they innovated and which the Prophet had foretold. Yet the *Khawârij* deemed themselves scrupulously pious and the only true Muslims on earth. When `Ali's murderer, `Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam al-Muradi, was dismembered and blinded he remained impassive and recited the Sura **"Recite! In the Name of Thy Lord"** (96:1) in its entirety, but when they moved to pull out his tongue he resisted; asked for the reason he said: "I hate to spend a single moment on earth not mentioning Allah." He was then executed and burnt. His forehead bore the trace of frequent prostration.[127]

The *Khawârij* pre-dated the *Rawâfid* in their vilification of Abu Bakr and `Umar.[128] `Ali declared it licit to fight them because they had killed the Companion Khabbab ibn al-Arathth

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[127]Narrated by Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (3:39) and Ibn Qutayba in *al-Akhbar al-Tiwal* (p. 215).

[128]As shown by the following hadith: Abu Ishaq narrated that `Abd Khayr said that he heard `Ali say on the pulpit: "The best of this Community after its Prophet are Abu Bakr and `Umar, and I could name the third if I wished." A man said to Abu Ishaq: "They claim that you are saying: 'best in evil'!" Abu Ishaq replied: "Are you a *Hur√ri*?" Narrated by Ahmad with a sound chain, as stated by Ahmad Shakir, in his *Musnad* (2:56 #1060).

and his wife for praising the four Caliphs.[129] The Prophet had predicted their appearance in many hadiths. Among them:

> `Ali sent the Prophet a treasure which the latter proceeded to distribute. The Quraysh became angry and said: "He is giving to the nobility of Najd and leaving us out!" The Prophet said: "I am only trying to win their hearts over to us." Then a man came with sunken eyes, protruding cheeks, big forehead, profuse beard, and shaven head. He said: "Fear Allah, O Muhammad!" The Prophet replied: "And who shall obey Allah if I disobey him? Does Allah trust me with the people of the earth, so that you should not trust me?" One of the Companions Khalid ibn Walid û asked permission to kill the man but the Prophet did not give it. He said: "Out of that man's seed shall come a people who will recite the Qur'an but it will not go past their throats. They will pass through religion the way an arrow passes through its quarry. They shall kill the Muslims and leave the idolaters alone. If I live to see them, verily I shall kill them the way the tribe of `Ad

[129]Narrated by al-Tabari in his *Tarikh* (5:2) and al-Dhahabi.

was killed."[130] Ibn Taymiyya cited this hadith as proof that the *Khawârij* shaved their heads.[131]

"The *Khawârij* are the dogs of Hell-fire."[132]

`Ali was described as having white hair which he parted in the middle, a very large white beard, and large, heavy eyes. He was heavyset and his height was medium to short. He was blunt in his renunciation of the world even in his own dress. When Ibn al-Nabbah came to him with the news that the treasury-house was filled with gold and silver `Ali summoned the people of Kufa and distributed everything to them with the words: "O Yellow, O White! Go fool other than me." Then he ordered the treasury-house swept, and he prayed two *rak`a* in it. Jurmuz said: "I saw `Ali coming out of his palace wearing a waist-cloth that reached to the middle of his shank and an outer garment tucked up at the sleeves, walking in the marketplace while hitting a small drum *(dirra)* and enjoining upon people Godwariness [God-

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[130]Narrated from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri by Bukhari and Muslim.
[131]Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmu` al-Fatawa* (21:119).
[132]Narrated from `Abd Allah ibn Abi Awfa with sound chains by Ibn Majah and Ahmad.

awareness?] and honesty in transactions. He would say: 'Observe good measure and do not bloat up the meat.'"[133] When one of the *Khawârij* criticized him for what he was wearing, he said: "What do you want with my clothing? This is farther from arrogance and more suitable for me as I am imitated by Muslims."[134]

Al-Hasan ibn `Ali narrated that the morning of his murder `Ali said: "Last night I woke up my family [to pray] because it was the night before *Jum`a* and the morning of Badr the seventeenth of Ramadan then I dozed off and the Prophet came before me. I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! What crookedness and contention have I found coming from your Community!' He said: 'Supplicate against them.' I said: 'O Allah! Substitute them with something that will be better for me, and substitute me with something that will be worse for them.'" Then `Ali went out to pray preceded by the *mu'adhdhin* Ibn al-Nabbah and followed by al-Hasan. `Ali came out of the gateway calling the people to

[133]Narrated by Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqat* (3:28), Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *al-Isti`ab* (3:48-49), al-Nuwayri in *Nihaya al-Arb* (20:220-221), and Ibn `Asakir in *Tarikh Dimashq* (42:484).

[134]Narrated from Zayd ibn Wahb by Ahmad in *al-Zuhd* (p. 165), al-Hakim (3:143), Ibn al-Jawzi's *Sifa al-Safwa* (1:332), and Abu Nu`aym's *Hilya*.

prayer and was faced by two men armed with swords. Ibn Muljam struck him on the head with a poisoned sword and was caught, while the other hit the arch of the gate and fled. `Ali said: "Feed the prisoner and give him water, if I live I shall decide about him, and if I die, kill him as I was killed without further enmity. **'Lo! Allah loves not aggressors'** (2:190, 5:87, 7:55)."

It was decided to make `Ali's grave a secret lest the *Khawârij* dig it up. After his son al-Hasan prayed the funeral prayer over him, he was buried at the Caliphal palace in Kufa, then all traces of his grave were effaced. It is also narrated that al-Hasan conveyed the body in a coffin to Madina and that on the way the camel that carried the coffin got lost by night and was found by members of the Tayyi' tribe who buried the body and slaughtered the camel.[135]

Among `Ali's sayings narrated by Abu Nu`aym with his chains:

[135]Narrated from al-Hasan ibn Shu`ayb al-Farawi by al-Suyuti in *Tarikh al-Khulafa'* and Ibn `Asakir in *Tarikh Dimashq* (42:567).

- From al-Husayn ibn `Ali: "The most sincere of people in their actions and the most knowledgeable of Allah are those who are strongest in their love and awe for the sanctity of the people of *lâ ilâha illallâh*."

- From `Abd Khayr: "Goodness does not consist in having much property and children, but in doing many good deeds, increasing your gentle character, and adorning yourself before people with the worship of your Lord. Then, if you do well, glorify Allah; if you do ill, ask forgiveness of Him. There is no good in the world except for two types of people: someone who sins and then follows up with repentance, and someone who races to do good deeds. What is done in Godwariness is never little, and how can something be little if accepted by Allah?"

- From Abu al-Zaghl: "Remember five instructions from me in following which you shall sooner exhaust your camels than run out of their benefit: A. let no servant hope for anything except from his Lord; let him not fear anything except his own sin; let no ignorant person feel ashamed to ask about what he knows not; let no

knowledgeable person, if asked about what he knows not, feel ashamed to say Allah knows best; and patience is in relation to belief like the head to the body, one has no belief if he has no patience."

- From Muhajir ibn `Umayr: "What I fear most is the hankering after idle desires and long hopes. The former blocks one from the truth and the latter causes forgetfulness of the hereafter. In truth the world has gone its way out, in truth the hereafter has come journeying to us û and each of the two has its own sons. Therefore be a son of the hereafter and do not be a son of the world! Today there are deeds without accounts, and tomorrow, accounts without deeds."

- From Abu Araka: "I have seen a remnant of the Companions of Allah's Messenger. I see no-one that resembles them. By Allah! They used to rise in the morning disheveled, dust-covered, pale, with something between their eyes like goat's knees, as they had spent the night chanting Allah's Book, turning from their feet to their foreheads. If Allah was mentioned they swayed the

way trees sway on a windy day, then their eyes poured out tears until û by Allah! û they soaked their clothes. By Allah! It is as if folks today sleep in indifference."

- From al-Hasan ibn `Ali: "Blessed is the servant that cries constantly to Allah, who has known people while they have not known him, and Allah has marked him with His contentment. These are the true beacons of guidance. Allah repels from them every wrongful dissension and shall enter them into His own mercy. They are not the wasteful tale-bearers[136] nor the ill-mannered self-displayers."[137]

- From `Asim ibn Damura: "The true, the real *faqîh* is he who does not push people to despair from Allah's mercy, nor lulls them into a false sense of safety from His Punishment, nor gives them licenses to disobey Allah, nor leaves the Qur'an for something else. There is no good in worship devoid of knowledge, nor in knowledge devoid

[136]Those who fanned dissension between `Ali and the other Companions.
[137]The *KhawΓrij*.

of understanding, nor in inattentive recitation." This is comparable to al-Hasan al-Basri's own definition: "Have you ever seen a *faqîh*? The *faqîh* is he who has renounced the world, longs for the hereafter, possesses insight in his Religion, and worships his Lord without cease."[138]

- From `Amr ibn Murra: "Be wellsprings of the Science and beacons in the night, wearing old clothes but possessing new hearts for which you shall be known in the heaven and remembered on the earth."

"This world lasts for an hour: Spend it in obedience."[139]

- "Thus does Knowledge die: when those who possess it die. By Allah, I do swear it! The earth will never be empty of one who establishes the proofs of Allah so that His proofs ans signs never cease. They are the fewest in number, but the greatest in rank before Allah. Through

[138]As cited by al-`Ayni in *`Umda al-Qari*, Book of *`Ilm*, in his commentary on the hadith: "He for whom Allah desires great good, He grants him the understanding of Religion." See also Ibn al-Jawzi, *Manaqib al-Hasan al-Basri* (p. 16).
[139]Cited by Ibn al-Jawzi in his chapter on `Ali in *Sifat al-Safwa*.

them Allah preserves His proofs until they bequeath it to those like them (before passing on) and plant it firmly in their hearts. By them knowledge has taken by assault the reality of things, so that they found easy what those given to comfort found hard, and found intimacy in what the ignorant found desolate. They accompanied the world with bodies whose spirits were attached to the highest regard. Ah, ah! How one yearns to see them!"[140]

Imam al-Nawawi narrated a remarkable patrolinear chain for a hadith going back to `Ali: "Among the best of the narrations of the type 'sons from fathers' is that of al-Khatib with a chain going back to `Abd al-Wahhab ibn `Abd al-`Aziz ibn al-Harith ibn Asad ibn al-Layth ibn Sulayman ibn al-Aswad ibn Sufyan ibn Yazid ibn Akina al-Tamimi who said: I heard my father (Yazid) say: I heard my father (Sufyan) say: I heard my father (al-Aswad) say: I heard my father (Sulayman) say: I heard my father (al-Layth) say: I heard my father (Asad) say: I heard my father (al-Harith) say: I heard my father (`Abd al-`Aziz) say: I heard my father (`Abd al-Wahhab) say: I heard `Ali ibn Abi Talib say: 'The

[140]*Ibid.*

compassionate *(al-hannân)* is he who comes to the one who shunned him. The granter of favor *(al-mannân)* is he who extends the favor before he is asked for it."[141]

Main sources: Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya al-Awliya'* 1:100-128 #4; al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* 1/2:615-660 #5.

[141]Al-Nawawi narrates it in his treatise on the science of hadith entitled *al-Taqrib wa al-Taysir* (p. 101).

AL-NU`MAN IBN THABIT

AL-NU`MAN IBN THABIT al-Taymi, al-Imam Abu Hanifa (d. 150), called "The Imam" by Abu Dawud, and "The Imam, one of those who have reached the sky" by Ibn Hajar, he is known in the Islamic world as "The Greatest Imam" *(al-imâm al-a`zam)* and his school has the largest number of followers among the four schools of *Ahl al-Sunna*. He is the first of the four *mujtahid* imams and the only Successor *(tâbi`i)* among them, having seen the Companions Anas ibn Malik, `Abd Allah ibn Abi Awfa, Sahl ibn Sa`d al-Sa`idi, Abu al-Tufayl, and `Amir ibn Wathila.[142]

Abu Hanifa is the first in Islam to organize the writing of *fiqh* under sub-headings embracing the whole of the Law, beginning with purity *(tahara)* followed by prayer *(sala)*, an order which was retained by all subsequent scholars such as Malik, Shafi`i, Abu Dawud, Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, and others. All these and their followers are indebted to him and give him a share of their reward because he was the first to open that road for them, according to the hadith of the Prophet: "He who starts something good in Islam has its reward and the reward of those who practice it until the Day of Judgement, without lessening in the least the reward of those who practice it. The one who starts something bad in Islam will incur its punishment and the punishment of all those who practice it until the Day of Judgement without

[142]See al-Safadi's *Wafayat al-A`yan* (5:406) in addition to the references cited in this entry.

lessening their punishment in the least."[143] Al-Shafi`i referred to this when he said: "People are all the children of Abu Hanifa in *fiqh*, of Ibn Ishaq in history, of Malik in hadith, and of Muqatil in *tafsîr*."

Al-Khatib narrated from Abu Hanifa's student Abu Nu`aym that the latter said: "Muslims should make *du`a* to Allah on behalf of Abu Hanifa in their prayers, because the *Sunan* and the *fiqh* were preserved for them through him. Al-Dhahabi wrote one volume on the life of each of the other three great Imams and said: "The account of Abu Hanifa's life requires two volumes." His son Hammad said as he washed his father's body for burial: "May Allah have mercy on you! You have exhausted whoever tries to catch up with you."

Abu Hanifa was scrupulously pious and refused Ibn Hubayra's offer of a judgeship even when the latter had him whipped. Like al-Bukhari and al-Shafi`i, he used to make 60 complete recitations *(khatma)* of Qur'an every Ramadan: one in the day, one in the night, besides his teaching and other duties.

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[143]Narrated from Jarir ibn `Abd Allah by Muslim.

Ibrahim ibn Rustum al-Marwazi said: “Four are the Imams that recited the entire Qur’an in a single *rak`a*: `Uthman ibn `Affan, Tamim al-Dari, Sa`id ibn Jubayr, and Abu Hanifa.” Ibn al-Mubarak said: “Abu Hanifa for a long time would pray all five prayers with a single ablution.”

Al-Suyuti relates in *Tabyid al-Sahifa* that a certain visitor came to observe Abu Hanifa and saw him all day long in the mosque, teaching relentlessly, answering every question from both the scholars and the common people, not stopping except to pray, then standing at home in prayer when people were asleep, hardly ever eating or sleeping, and yet the most handsome and gracious of people, always alert and never tired, day after day for a long time, so that in the end the visitor said: “I became convinced that this was not an ordinary matter, but *wilâya* (Friendship with Allah).”

Al-Shafi`i said: “Knowledge revolves around three men: Malik, al-Layth, and Ibn `Uyayna.” Al-Dhahabi commented: “Rather, it revolves also around al-Awza`i, al-Thawri, Ma`mar,

Abu Hanifa, Shu`ba, and the two Hammads [ibn Zayd and ibn Salama]."[144]

Sufyan al-Thawri praised Abu Hanifa when he said: "We were in front of Abu Hanifa like small birds in front of the falcon," and Sufyan stood up for him when Abu Hanifa visited him after his brother's death, and he said: "This man holds a high rank in knowledge, and if I did not stand up for his science I would stand up for his age, and if not for his age then for his Godwariness *(wara`)*, and if not for his Godwariness then for his jurisprudence *(fiqh)*." Ibn al-Mubarak praised Abu Hanifa and called him a sign of Allah. Both Ibn al-Mubarak and Sufyan al-Thawri said: "Abu Hanifa was in his time the most knowledgeable of all people on earth." Ibn Hajar also related that Ibn al-Mubarak said: "If Allah had not rescued me with Abu Hanifa and Sufyan [al-Thawri] I would have been like the rest of the common people." Dhahabi relates it as: "I would have been an innovator."

[144]Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar* (7:412).

An example of Abu Hanifa's perspicuity in inferring legal rulings from source-texts is his reading of the following hadith:

> The Prophet said: "Your life in comparison to the lifetime of past nations is like the period between the time of the mid-afternoon prayer *('asr)* and sunset. Your example and the example of the Jews and Christians is that of a man who employed laborers and said to them: 'Who will work for me until mid-day for one *qirât* (a unit of measure, part of a dinar) each?' The Jews worked until mid-day for one *qirât* each. Then the man said: 'Who will work for me from mid-day until the *'asr* prayer for one *qirât* each?' The Christians worked from mid-day until the *'asr* prayer for one *qirât* each. Then the man said: 'Who will work for me from the *`asr* prayer until the *maghrib* prayer for two *qirât* each?' And that, in truth, is all of you. In truth, you have double the wages. The Jews and the Christians became angry and said: 'We did more labor but took less wages.' But Allah said: 'Have I wronged you in any of your rights?' They replied no.

Then He said: 'This is My Blessing which I give to whom I wish.'''[145]

It was deduced from the phrase "We did more labor" that the time of mid-day to *`asr* must always be longer than that between *`asr* and *maghrib*. This is confirmed by authentic reports whereby:

- The Prophet hastened to pray *zuhr* and delayed praying *`asr*.[146]
- The Prophet said: "May Allah have mercy on someone who prays four *rak`a*s before *`asr*.[147]
- `Ali delayed praying *`asr* until shortly before the sun changed, and he reprimanded the *mu'adhdhin* who was

[145]Narrated from Ibn 'Umar by Bukhari.
[146]Narrated from Umm Salama by al-Tirmidhi and Ahmad with sound chains as stated in *I`la' al-Sunan* (2:42 #490).
[147]Narrated from Ibn `Umar by al-Tirmidhi who graded it *hasan gharεb*.

hurrying him with the words: "He is trying to teach us the Sunna!"[148]

- Ibrahim al-Nakha`i said: "Those that came before you used to hasten more than you to pray *zuhr* and delay more than you in praying *`asr*."[149] Al-Tahanawi said: "Those that came before you" are the Companions.
- Ibn Mas`ud delayed praying *`asr*.[150]

Sufyan al-Thawri, Abu Hanifa, and his two companions Muhammad ibn a-Hasan and Abu Yusuf therefore considered it better to lengthen the time between *zuhr* and *`asr* by delaying the latter prayer as long as the sun did not begin to redden, while the majority of the authorities considered that praying *`asr* early is better, on the basis of other sound evidence to that effect.

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[148]Narrated from Ziad ibn `Abd al-Rahman al-Nakha`i by al-Hakim (1:192) who said it is *sahεh*, and al-Dhahabi concurred as stated in *I`la' al-Sunan* (2:43-44 #493)..

[149]Narrated by `Abd al-Razzaq in his *Musannaf* with a sound chain as stated by al-Tahanawi in *I`la' al-Sunan* (2:44 #494).

[150]Narrated from `Abd al-Rahman ibn Yazid by `Abd al-Razzaq in his *Musannaf* (1:551 #2089) and Ibn Abi Shayba in his (#22701) with sound chains as stated in *I`la' al-Sunan* (2:45 #496).

Abu Hanifa

Like every Friend of Allah, Abu Hanifa had his enemies. `Abdan said that he heard Ibn al-Mubarak say: “If you hear them mention Abu Hanifa derogatively then they are mentioning me derogatively. In truth I fear for them Allah’s displeasure.” Authentically related from Bishr al-Hafi is the statement: “No-one criticizes Abu Hanifa except an envier or an ignoramus.”[151] Hamid ibn Adam al-Marwazi said: I heard Ibn al-Mubarak say: “I never saw anyone more fearful of Allah than Abu Hanifa, even on trial under the whip and through money and property.” Abu Mu`awiya al-Darir said: “Love of Abu Hanifa is part of the Sunna.”

Main sources: al-Khatib, *Tarikh Baghdad* 13:324-356; al-Dhahabi, *Manaqib Abi Hanifa* 22-36 and *Tabaqat al-Huffaz* 1:168; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib* 10:450; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya* 10:114; al-Suyuti, *Tabyid al-Sahifa* p. 94-95; al-Haytami, *al-Khayrat al-Hisan*.

[151]Narrated by al-Dhahabi in *Tarikh al-Islam* (6:142) and *Manaqib Abi Hanifa* (p. 32).

MALIK IBN ANAS

MALIK IBN ANAS ibn Malik ibn `Amr, al-Imam, Abu `Abd Allah al-Humyari al-Asbahi al-Madani (93-179), the Shaykh of Islam, Proof of the Community, Imam of the Abode of Emigration, and Knowledgeable Scholar of Madina predicted by the Prophet. The second of the four major *mujtahid* imams, whose school filled North Africa, al-Andalus, much of Egypt, and some of al-Sham, Yemen, Sudan, Iraq, and Khurasan. He is the author of *al-Muwatta'* ("The Approved"), formed of the sound narrations of the Prophet from the people of the Hijaz together with the sayings of the Companions, the Followers, and those after them. It was hailed by al-Shafi`i as the soundest book on earth after the Qur'an, nearest book on earth to the Qur'an, most correct book on earth after the Qur'an, and most beneficial book on earth after the Qur'an according to four separate narrations.[152] Malik said: "I showed my book to seventy jurists of Madina, and every single one of them approved me for it *(kulluhum wâta'ani `alayh)*, so I named it 'The Approved'." Imam al-Bukhari said that the soundest of all chains of transmission was "Malik, from Nafi`, from Ibn `Umar." The scholars of hadith call it the Golden Chain, and there are eighty narrations with this chain in the *Muwatta'*.

Among those Malik narrated from in the *Muwatta'*: Ayyub al-Sakhtyani, Ja`far ibn Muhammad (al-Sadiq), Zayd ibn Aslam, `Ata' al-Khurasani, al-Zuhri, Ibn al-Munkadir, `Alqama, Nafi` the freedman of Ibn `Umar, and others. Among those who

[152] This was before Bukhari and Muslim produced their compilations.

narrated from Malik: al-Zuhri, Ibn Jurayj, Abu Hanifa, al-Awza`i, Sufyan al-Thawri, Shu`ba, Ibn al-Mubarak, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, `Abd al-Rahman ibn Mahdi, Waki`, Yahya al-Qattan, al-Shafi`i, Ibn Wahb, Abu Dawud al-Tayalisi, `Abd al-Razzaq, and many others.

The Prophet said: "Very soon will people beat the flanks of camels in search of knowledge, and they shall find no-one more knowledgeable than the knowledgeable scholar of Madina."[153] Al-Tirmidhi, al-Qadi `Iyad, Dhahabi and others relate from Sufyan ibn `Uyayna, `Abd al-Razzaq, Ibn Mahdi, Ibn Ma`in, Dhu'ayb ibn `Imama, Ibn al-Madini, and others that they considered that scholar to be Malik ibn Anas. It is also related from Ibn `Uyayna that he later considered it to be `Abd Allah ibn `Abd al-`Aziz al-`Umari. Al-Dhahabi said of the latter: "He possessed knowledge and good *fiqh*, spoke the truth fearlessly,

[153]Narrated from Abu Hurayra by Ahmad in his *Musnad*, al-Tirmidhi who said it is *hasan sahεh*, al-Hakim (1:91) who said it is *sahεh* by Muslim's criterion, al-Bayhaqi in *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (1:386), and al-Nasa'i without the words "very soon" in his *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (2:489 #4291). Al-Dhahabi said in the *Siyar* (7:388): "This is a hadith whose chain is neat, and content strange."

ordered good, and remained aloof from society. He used to press Malik in private to renounce the world and seclude himself."

Abu Mus`ab said: "Malik did not pray in congregation [in the Prophet's mosque] for twenty-five years. He was asked: 'What is preventing you?' He said: 'Lest I see something reprehensible and be obligated to change it.'"[154] Another narration from Abu Mus`ab states: "After Malik left the [Prophet's] mosque he used to pray in his house with a congregation that followed him, and he prayed the *Jum`a* prayer alone in his house."[155] Ibn Sa`d narrates from Muhammad ibn `Umar: "Malik used to come to the Mosque and pray the prayers and the *Jum`a*, as well as the funeral prayers. He used to visit the sick and sit in the Mosque where his companions would came and saw him. Then he quit sitting there, instead he would pray and leave, and he quit attending the funeral prayers. Then he quit everything, neither attending the prayers nor the *Jum`a* in the mosque. Nor would he visit anyone who was sick or other than that. The people bore with it, for they were extremely fond of him

[154]Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar* (7:395).
[155]Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar* (7:424).

and respected him too much. This lasted until he died. If asked about it, he said: 'Not everyone can mention his excuse.'"[156]

Ibn `Abd al-Barr said that Malik was the first who compiled a book formed exclusively of sound narrations. Abu Bakr ibn al-`Arabi said: "The *Muwatta'* is the first foundation and the core, while al-Bukhari's book is the second foundation in this respect. Upon these two all the rest have built, such as Muslim and al-Tirmidhi." Shah Wali Allah said something similar and added that it is the principal authority of all four Schools of Law, which stand in relation to it like the commentary stands in relation to the main text. Malik composed it in the course of forty years, having started with ten thousand narrations until he reduced them to their present number of under 2,000.

Al-Suyuti said: "There is no *mursal* narration in the *Muwatta'* except it has one or several strengthening proofs *(`âdid aw `awâdid)*." Ibn `Abd al-Barr composed a book in which he listed all the narrations of the *Muwatta'* that are either *mursal*, or

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[156]Ibn Sa`d, *Tabaqat* (5:468-469).

munqati`*, or *mu`dal, and he provided complete sound chains for all of them except four:

- "In truth I do not forget, but I am made to forget so that I shall start a Sunna." This is the second hadith in the book of *Sahw*.

- "The Prophet was shown the lifespans of people before his time, or whatever Allah willed of it, and seemed alarmed that the lifespans of his Community were too brief to reach the amount of deeds reached by previous communities who lived long. Whereupon Allah gave him the Most Precious Night *(layla al-qadr)*, which is better than a thousand months." This is the fifteenth hadith in the book of *I`tikaf*.

- Mu`adh ibn Jabal said: "The last instruction I received from Allah's Messenger when I put my foot in the stirrup was: 'Beautify your manners for the people, O Mu`adh ibn Jabal!'" This is the first hadith of the book of *Husn al-Khuluq*.

- "If clouds appear towards the sea then go northwards, that is the mark of heavyish rain." This is the fifth hadith of the book of *Istisqa'*.

Among the hadith masters, al-`Iraqi and his student Ibn Hajar agreed with Ibn `Abd al-Barr that the above four hadiths have no chain, but others follow a different view: Shaykh Muhammad al-Shinqiti mentioned in his *Dalil al-Salik ila Muwatta' al-Imam Malik* (p. 14) that Shaykh Salih al-Fulani al-`Umari al-Madani said: "Ibn al-Salah provided complete chains for the four hadiths in question in an independent epistle which I have in my possession, written in his own hand." Shaykh Ahmad Shakir said: "But al-Shinqiti did not mention what these chains were, and so the scholars cannot judge on the question."

Al-Zurqani counted as sixty-nine the number of those who narrated the *Muwatta'* directly from Malik, geographically spread as follows:

- Seventeen in Madina, among them Abu Mus`ab Ahmad ibn Abi Bakr al-Zuhri, whose version has received a recent edition;

- Two in Mecca, among them al-Shafi`i;

- Ten in Egypt, among them `Abd Allah ibn Wahb, `Abd Allah ibn Yusuf al-Tinnisi al-Dimashqi, whose narration al-Bukhari chose, and Dhu al-Nun al-Misri;

- Twenty-seven in Iraq, among them `Abd al-Rahman ibn Mahdi, whose narration Ahmad ibn Hanbal chose, Yahya ibn Yahya al-Tamimi al-Hanzali al-Naysaburi, whose narration Muslim chose, and Abu Hanifa's student Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani, whose version has been published but greatly differs from the others and also contains other than what is narrated from Malik, so that it became known as *Muwatta' Muhammad*;

- Thirteen in al-Andalus, among them the jurist Yahya ibn Yahya al-Laythi "the Sage of al-Andalus" û thus nicknamed by Malik himself û whose version is the most commonly used today and is the version meant by the term "Malik's *Muwatta'*." He is mainly responsible for the spread of the Maliki School in al-Andalus.

- Two from al-Qayrawan;
- Two from Tunis;
- Seven from al-Sham.

Imam Malik is the connection of the entire Islamic Community to the knowledge of the Sunna as it was preserved by the scholars of the Prophet's city, al-Madina. This reference-point of his school of jurisprudence is observed time and again in the *Muwatta'* with the phrase: "And this is what I have found (or seen) the people of knowledge practicing." He was keenly aware of his mission as both the transmitter and the elucidator of the Sunna. This is characteristic of his students' praise of him, beginning with al-Shafi`i's famous sayings: "No-one constitutes as great a favor to me in Allah's Religion as Malik" and "When the scholars of knowledge are mentioned, Malik is the guiding star." `Abd Allah ibn Wahb said: "Every memorizer of hadith that does not have an Imam in *fiqh* is misguided *(dâll)*, and if Allah had not rescued us with Malik and al-Layth (ibn Sa`d), I

would have been misguided."[157] Abu Mus`ab recounts the following story:

> I went in to see Malik ibn Anas. He said to me: "Look under my place of prayer or prayer-mat and see what is there." I looked and found a certain writing. He said: "Read it." It contained the account of a dream which one of his brothers had seen and which concerned him. Malik recited it [from memory]: "I saw the Prophet in my sleep. He was in his mosque and the people were gathered around him, and he said: 'I have hidden for you under my pulpit *(minbar)* something good – or: knowledge – and I have ordered Malik to distribute it to the people.'" Then Malik wept, so I got up and left him.[158]

The caliph Abu Ja`far al-Mansur[159] had forbidden Malik to narrate the hadith: "The divorce of the coerced does not take

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[157]Ibn Abi Zayd, *al-Jami` fi al-Sunan* (p. 118-119). Also al-Dhahabi.

[158]Ibn al-Jawzi, *Sifa al-Safwa* (1/2:120), chapter titled "Layer 6 of the People of Madina." The account is also in Abu Nu`aym's *Hilya* and Dhahabi's *Siyar*.

[159]Al-Mansur ruled 136-158. He is the one that slew the descendents of the Prophet Muhammad and Ibrahim the sons of `Abd Allah ibn Hasan ibn al-Hasan

effect" *(laysa `ala mustakrahin / li mukrahin talâq)*.[160] Then a spy came to Malik and asked him about the issue, whereupon Malik narrated the hadith in front of everyone. He was seized and lashed until his shoulder was dislocated and he passed out. When he came to, he said: "He [al-Mansur] is absolved of my lashing." When asked why he had absolved him, Malik replied: "I feared to meet the Prophet after being the cause for the perdition of one of his relatives."[161] Ibrahim ibn Hammad said he saw Malik being carried up and walking away, carrying one of his hands with the other. Then they shaved his face and he was mounted on a camel and paraded. He was ordered to deprecate himself aloud,

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ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib in the year 145 together with a large number of the People of the Prophet's House. Al-Suyuti says he was the first to introduce dissension between the House of `Abbas and the House of `Ali who had been as one previously. He also harmed or imprisoned a number of major scholars such as `Abd al-Hamid ibn Ja`far, Ibn `Ajlan, and Abu Hanifa whom he whipped for refusing a judgeship. The year he jailed Sufyan al-Thawri and `Abbad ibn Kathir he died. Al-Suyuti, *Tarikh al-Khulafa'* (p. 279-280).

[160]Narrated *mawq√f* from Ibn `Abbas by Ibn Abi Shayba in his *Musannaf* (1:238b, 5:48), `Abd al-Razzaq in his (6:407), al-Bayhaqi's *Sunan* (7:357), al-Bukhari in his *Sahih* without chain, and others.

[161]Al-Mansur was the great-grandson of `Abd Allah ibn `Abbas, the Prophet's cousin.

whereupon he said: “Whoever knows me, knows me; whoever does not know me, my name is Malik ibn Anas, and I say: The divorce of the coerced is null and void!” When news of this reached Ja`far ibn Sulayman (d. 175) the governor of Madina and cousin of al-Mansur, he said: “Bring him down, let him go.”

Imam Malik held the hadith of the Prophet in such reverence that he never narrated anything nor gave a *fatwa* unless in a state of ritual purity. Isma`il ibn Abi Uways said: “I asked my uncle û Malik û about something. He bade me sit, made ablution, sat on the couch, and said: *la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah*. He did not give a *fatwa* except he said it first.” Al-Haytham said: “I heard Malik being asked forty eight questions, to thirty-two of which he replied: ‘I do not know.’” Abu Mus`ab reported that Malik said: “I did not give *fatwa*s before seventy scholars first witnessed to my competence to do it.”

Malik’s ethics, together with the states of awe and emotion which were observed on him by his entourage, were no doubt partly inherited from great shaykhs of his such as Ja`far al-Sadiq, Ibn Hurmuz, and Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri. He visited his shaykh Ibn Hurmuz (d. 148) every day from morning to night for a period of

about eight years and recounts: “I would come to Ibn Hurmuz, whereupon he would order the servant to close the door and let down the curtain, then he would start speaking of the beginning of this *Umma*, and tears would stream down his beard.” The Maliki shaykh Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusantini (d. 810) wrote:

> It was the practice of the Pious Predecessors and the Imams of the past that whenever the Prophet was mentioned in their presence they were overwhelmed by reverence, humbleness, stillness, and dignity. Ja`far [as-Sadiq] ibn Muhammad [Baqir] ibn `Ali [Zainul Abidin] ibn al-Husayn ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib would turn pale whenever he heard the Prophet mentioned. Imam Malik would not mention a hadith except in a state of ritual purity. `Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr al-Siddiq would turn red and stammer whenever he heard the Prophet mentioned. As for `Amir ibn `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr ibn al-`Awamm al-Asadi (one of the early Sufis), he would weep until his eyes had no tears left in them. When any hadiths were mentioned in their presence they would lower their voices. Malik said:

"The Prophet's sacredness *(hurma)* in death is as his sacredness was in life."[162]

Qutayba said: "When we went to see Malik, he would come out to us adorned, wearing *kuhl* on his eyes, perfumed, wearing his best clothes, sit at the head of the circle, call for palm-leaf fans, and give each one of us a fan." Muhammad ibn `Umar [said]: "Malik's circle was a circle of dignity and courtesy. He was a man of majestic countenance and nobility. There was no part for self-display, vain talk, or loud speech in his circle. His reader would read for all, and no-one looked into his own book, nor asked questions, out of awe before Malik and out of respect for him."

When the caliph al-Mahdi sent his sons Harun and Musa[163] to learn from Malik, the latter would not read to them but told them: "The people of Madina read before the scholar just like

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[162]Abu al-`Abbas Ahmad ibn al-Khatib, known as Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusantini al-Maliki, *Wasila al-Islam bi al-Nabi `Alayhi al-Sala wa al-Salam* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1984, p. 145-146).

[163]Al-Mahdi ruled 158-168; Musa ibn al-Mahdi, Abu Muhammad al-Hadi ruled 169-170; al-Rashid Harun Abu Ja`far ibn al-Mahdi ruled 170-193.

children read to the teacher, and if they make a mistake, he corrects them." Similarly when Harun al-Rashid with his own two sons requested Malik to read for them, he replied: "I have stopped reading for anybody a long time ago." When Harun requested the people to leave so that he could read freely before Malik, the latter also refused and said: "If the common people are forbidden to attend because of the particulars, the latter will not profit." It is known that Malik's way in the transmission of hadith, like Ibn al-Musayyib, `Urwa, al-Qasim, Salim, Nafi`, al-Zuhri, and others, was *`ard* ("reading by the student") and not *samâ`* ("audition from the shaykh"), although the student states by convention, in both cases: "So-and-so narrated to us."

The caliph Harun al-Rashid said to Malik after hearing his answers to certain questions he put to him: "You are, by Allah! the wisest of people and the most knowledgeable of people." Malik replied: "No, by Allah! O Leader of the Believers." He said: "Yes! But you keep it hidden. By Allah! If I live, I shall put your sayings in writing like the *mushaf*s are put down in writing, and I shall disseminate them to the ends of the world." But Malik refused.

When one of the caliphs manifested his intention to replace the Prophet's wooden pulpit with a pulpit of silver and jewels Malik said: "I do not consider good the hindrance of the people from access to the Prophet's relics." *(lâ ara an yuhrama al-nâsu athara rasulillah.)*

Among Malik's sayings:

- From Ibn Wahb: "Knowledge Allah places wherever He wills. It does not consist in narrating a lot."
- From Ibn Wahb: "The saying has reached me[164]that none renounces the world and guards himself except he will speak wisdom."
- From Ibn Wahb: "Knowledge diminishes and does not increase. Knowledge has diminished incessantly after the Prophets and the Books."

[164]This is a phrase that denotes attribution to the Prophet in Malik's terminology.

- From `Abd Allah ibn `Abd al-Hakam: "The Companions differed in the Branches *(al-furû`)* and split into factions *(tafarraqû),* and each one of them was correct in himself."[165]

- From Ja`far ibn `Abd Allah: "We were with Malik when a man came and asked him: 'O Abu `Abd Allah! **"The Merciful is established over the Throne"** (20:5): how is He established?' Nothing affected Malik as much as that man's question. He looked at the ground and started prodding it with a twig he held in his hand until he was completely soaked in sweat. Then he lifted his head and said: 'The "how" of it is inconceivable; the "establishment" part of it is not unknown; belief in it is obligatory; asking about it is an innovation; and I believe that you are a man of innovation.' Then he gave an order and the man was led out."[166]

[165]Al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar* (7:414) said: "Its chain of transmission is fair."
[166]Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar* (7:415).

- From Ibn Wahb: “We were with Malik when a man asked him: ‘O Abu `Abd Allah! **“The Merciful is established over the Throne”** (20:5): how is His establishment?’ Malik lowered his head and began to sweat profusely. Then he lifted up his head and said: ‘**“The Merciful is established over the Throne”** just as He described Himself. One cannot ask “how.” “How” does not apply to Him. And you are an evil man, a man of innovation. Take him out!’ The man was led out.”[167]

- From Yahya ibn Yahya al-Tamimi and Malik’s shaykh Rabi`a ibn Abi `Abd al-Rahman: “We were with Malik when a man came and asked him: ‘O Abu `Abd Allah! **“The Merciful is established over the Throne”** (20:5): how is He established?’ Malik lowered his head and remained thus until he was completely soaked in sweat. Then he said: ‘The establishment is not unknown; the “how” is inconceivable; belief in it is obligatory; asking about it is an innovation; and I do not think that you are

[167]Narrated by al-Bayhaqi with a sound chain in *al-Asma’ wa al-Sifat* (2:304-305 #866), al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar* (7:416), and Ibn Hajar in *Fath al-Bari* (13:501).

anything but an innovator.' Then he ordered that the man be led out."[168]

- From Ma`n: "Disputation *(al-jidâl)* in the Religion fosters self-display, does away with the light of the heart and hardens it, and bequeaths aimless wandering."

- From Ma`n and others: "There are four types of narrators one does not take from: An outright scoffer, even if he is the greatest narrator; an innovator who invites people to his innovation; someone who lies about people, even if I do not charge him with mendacity in hadith; and a righteous, honorable worshipper if he does not memorize what he narrates." Malik's last clause refers to the two conditions *sine qua non* of the trustworthy narrator, who must possess not only moral uprightness *(`adâla)* but also accuracy in transmission *(dabt).* The clause elucidates the paradox current among hadith scholars whereby "No-one

[168]Narrated by al-Bayhaqi with a sound chain in *al-Asma' wa al-Sifat* (2:305-306 #867) and by Ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawani in *al-Jami` fi al-Sunan* (p. 123).

lies more than the righteous."[169] The reason for this is that the righteous do not doubt the Muslim's attribution of a saying to his Prophet, and so they accept it without suspicion, whereas al-Shafi`i said: "If Malik had the slightest doubt about a hadith, he discarded the entire hadith." Dr. Nur al-Din `Itr said: "The manner of the righteous who narrate everything indiscriminately stems from purity of heart and good opinion, and the scholars have said about such narrators: 'Lies run off their tongue without their intending it.'"[170] There is a fundamental difference between the latter and those who deliberately forge lies or narrate forgeries passed for hadith, and who are condemned by the Prophet's saying: "Whoever lies about me wilfully, let him take now his seat in the Fire!"[171]

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[169]Cf. Ibn Rajab's *Sharh `Ilal al-Tirmidhi* towards the end, and other books of *mustalah*. See Dr. Nur al-Din `Itr's *Usul al-Jarh wa al-Ta`dil* (p. 108-109).
[170]In a class communication attended by the author.
[171]A mass-narrated *(mutawΓtir)* hadith from many Companions in Bukhari and Muslim.

- From Ibn al-Qasim: “Malik used to say: ‘Belief increases.’ He would stop short of saying that it decreases.”

- From Ibn Abi al-Zubayr: “I saw `Ata’ ibn Abi Rabah enter the [Prophet’s] Mosque, then take hold of the pommel of the Pulpit, after which he faced the *Qibla* [to pray].”

- In the *Muwatta’*: “Shaving the moustache is an innovation.” It is elsewhere related that Malik himself was tall, heavyset, imposing of stature, very fair, with white hair and beard but bald, with a huge beard and blue eyes; he “detested and condemned” shaving of the moustache, and he always wore beautiful clothes, especially white.

- Narrated by Ibn Abi Zayd: “The turban was worn from the beginning of Islam and it did not cease to be worn until our time. I did not see anyone among the People of Excellence except they wore the turban, such as Yahya ibn Sa`id, Rabi`a, and Ibn Hurmuz. I would see in

Rabi`a's circle more than thirty men wearing turbans and I was one of them; Rabi`a did not put it down until the Pleiades rose and he used to say: 'I swear that I find it increases intelligence.' Jibril was seen in the image of (the Companion) Dihya (ibn Khalifa) al-Kalbi wearing a turban with its extremity hanging between his shoulder-blades."[172] Ashhab said: "When Malik wore the turban he passed it under his chin and let its extremity hang behind his back, and he wore musk and other scents."

Main sources: Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya al-Awliya'* 6:345-392 #386; al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* 7:382-437 #1180; M. Fouad `Abd al-Baqi, Introduction to Malik's *Muwatta'*. >>>

[172]Ibn Abi Zayd, *al-Jami` fi al-Sunan* (1982 ed. p. 228-229).

MUHAMMAD IBN IDRIS SHAFi'i

MUHAMMAD IBN IDRIS ibn al-`Abbas, al-Imam al-Shafi`i, Abu `Abd Allah al-Shafi`i al-Hijazi al-Qurashi al-Hashimi al-Muttalibi (d. 204), the offspring of the House of the Prophet, the peerless one of the great *mujtahid* imams and jurisprudent *par excellence*, the scrupulously pious ascetic and Friend of Allah, he laid down the foundations of *fiqh* in his *Risala*, which he said he revised and re-read four hundred times, then said: "Only Allah's Book is perfect and free from error."

He is the cousin of the Prophet û Allah's blessings and peace upon him û descending from al-Muttalib who is the brother of Hashim, `Abd al-Muttalib's father. Someone praised the Banu Hashim in front of the Prophet, whereby he interlaced the fingers of his two hands and said: "We and they are but one and the same thing."[173] Al-Nawawi listed three peculiar merits of al-Shafi`i: his sharing the Prophet's lineage at the level of their common ancestor `Abd Manaf; his birth in the Holy Land of Palestine and upbringing in Mecca; and his education at the hands of superlative scholars together with his own superlative intelligence and knowledge of the Arabic language. To this Ibn Hajar added two more: the hadith of the Prophet, "O Allah! Guide Quraysh, for the science of the scholar that comes from them will encompass the earth. O Allah! You have let the first of them taste bitterness, so let the latter of them taste reward."[174] Another

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[173]Narrated from `Uthman by al-Bukhari in his *Sahih*.

[174]Narrated from Abu Hurayra by al-Khatib in *al-Tarikh*; from Ibn Mas`ud by Abu Dawud al-Tayalisi in his *Musnad*; from Ibn `Abbas by al-Bayhaqi in *al-Madkhal*

hadith of the Prophet says: "Truly, Allah shall send forth for this Community, at the onset of every hundred years, someone who will renew their Religion for them."[175] The scholars agreed, among them Abu Qilaba (d. 276) and Imam Ahmad, that the first narration signified al-Shafi`i,[176] and the second signified `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz and then al-Shafi`i.[177]

He was born in Ghazza or `Asqalan in 150, the year of Abu Hanifa's death, and moved to Mecca at the age of two, following his father's death, where he grew up. He was early a skillful

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and al-Quda`i; and from `Ali by al-Hakim and al-Abiri, and from all four Companions by Ibn Hajar in *Tawali al-Ta'sis*, all with weak chains which, al-Bayhaqi and Ibn Hajar said, if collated, make the hadith strong. The second sentence is narrated alone from Ibn `Abbas by Tirmidhi who said it is *hasan sahεh gharεb*, and by Ahmad with a good chain according to Ibn Hajar in *Tawali al-Ta'sis* (p. 44). Shaykh Ahmad Shakir said it is *sahεh* in his edition of the *Musnad* (2:553 #2170).

[175]Narrated from Abu Hurayra by Abu Dawud in his *Sunan*, al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak*, and others, with a strong chain as stated by Ibn Hajar in *Tawali al-Ta'sis* (p. 49).

[176]As narrated in al-Mizzi's *Tahdhib al-Kamal* (3:22 #1162) and Ibn Hajar's *Tawali al-Ta'sis* (p. 45).

[177]As narrated in al-Bayhaqi's *Manaqib al-Shafi`i* (1:54), Ibn Hajar's *Tawali al-Ta'sis* (p. 47-49), al-`Ajluni's *Kashf al-Khafa'*, and elsewhere.

archer, then he took to learning language and poetry until he gave himself to *fiqh*, beginning with hadith. He memorized the Qur'an at age seven, then Malik's *Muwatta'* at age ten, at which time his teacher would deputize him to teach in his absence. At age thirteen he went to see Malik, who was impressed by his memory and intelligence.

Malik ibn Anas and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani were among his most prominent teachers and he took position against both of them in *fiqh*. Al-Shafi`i said: "From Muhammad ibn al-Hasan I wrote a camel-load." Al-Hakim narrated from `Abd Allah ibn `Abd al-Hakam: "Al-Shafi`i never ceased to speak according to Malik's position and he would say: 'We do not differ from him other than in the way of his companions,' until some young men spoke unbecomingly at length behind his back, whereupon al-Shafi`i resolved to put his differences with Malik in writing. Otherwise, his whole life he would say, whenever asked something: 'This is what the Teacher said' û *hâdha qawl al-ustadh* û meaning Malik."[178]

[178] Ibn Hajar, *Tawali al-Ta'sis* p. 153-154.

Like Abu Hanifa and al-Bukhari, he recited the entire Qur'an each day at prayer, and twice a day in the month of Ramadan.

Al-Muzani said: "I never saw one more handsome of face than al-Shafi`i. If he grasped his beard it would not exceed his fist." Ibn Rahuyah described him in Mecca as wearing bright white clothes with an intensely black beard. Al-Za`farani said that when he was in Baghdad in the year 195 he dyed his beard with henna.

Abu `Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam said: "If the intelligence of an entire nation was brought together he would have encompassed it." Similarly, al-Muzani said: "I have been looking into al-Shafi`i's *Risala* for fifty years, and I do not recall a single time I looked at it without learning some new benefit."

Al-Sakhawi in the introduction to his *al-Jawahir wa al-Durar* and others narrate that someone criticized Ahmad ibn Hanbal for attending the *fiqh* sessions of al-Shafi`i and leaving the hadith sessions of Sufyan ibn `Uyayna. Ahmad replied: "Keep quiet! If you miss a hadith with a shorter chain you can find it elsewhere with a longer chain and it will not harm you.

But if you do not have the reasoning of this man [al-Shafi`i], I fear you will never be able to find it elsewhere." Ahmad is also related by his students Abu Talib and Humayd ibn Zanjuyah to say: "I never saw anyone adhere more to hadith than al-Shafi`i. No-one preceded him in writing down the hadith in a book." The meaning of this is that al-Shafi`i possessed the understanding of hadith after which Ahmad sought, as evidenced by the latter's statement: "How rare is *fiqh* among the scholars of hadith!"[179] This is a reference to the hadith: "It may be one carries understanding *(fiqh)* without being a person of understanding *(faqîh)*."[180] Sufyan himself would defer to al-Shafi`i in matters of *tafsîr* and *fatwa*. Yunus ibn Abi Ya`la said: "Whenever al-Shafi`i went into *tafsîr*, it was as if he had witnessed the revelation." Ahmad ibn Hanbal also said: "Not one of the scholars of hadith touched an inkwell nor a pen except he owed a huge debt to al-Shafi`i."

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[179]Cited by Shaykh `Abd al-Fattah Abu Ghudda in his introduction to Muhammad al-Shaybani's *Muwatta'*.

[180]A nearly-mass-narrated *(mashh√r)* sound hadith of the Prophet reported from several Companions by al-Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, and Ahmad.

Al-Shafi`i was known for his peculiar strength in Arabic language, poetry, and philology. Bayhaqi narrated:

> [From Ibn Hisham:] I was al-Shafi`i's sitting-companion for a long time, and I never heard him use except a word which, carefully considered, one would not find (in its context) a better word in the entire Arabic language. . . . Al-Shafi`i's discourse, in relation to language, is a proof in itself.
>
> [From al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Za`farani:] A group of bedouins used to frequent al-Shafi`i's gathering with us and sit in a corner. One day I asked their leader: "You are not interested in scholarship; why do you keep coming to sit with us?" They said: "We come to hear al-Shafi`i's language."[181]

Al-Shafi`i trod the path of the *Salaf* in avoiding any interpretation of the verses and narrations pertaining to the divine attributes. He practiced "relegation of the meaning" *(tafwîd al-mi`na)* to a higher source, as established in his saying: "I leave the meaning of the verses of the Attributes to Allah, and I leave

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[181]Al-Bayhaqi *Manaqib al-Shafi`i* (2:42-46).

the meaning of the hadiths of the attributes to Allah's Messenger." At the same time, rare instances of interpretation are recorded from him. Thus al-Bayhaqi relates that al-Muzani reported from al-Shafi`i the following commentary on the verse: "To Allah belong the East and the West, and wheresoever you turn, there is Allah's face *(wajh)*" (2:115): "It means – and Allah knows best – thither is the bearing *(wajh)* towards which Allah has directed you."[182] Al-Hakkari (d. 486) related in his book *`Aqida al-Shafi`i* that the latter said: "We affirm those attributes, and we negate from them likeness between them and creation *(al-tashbîh),* just as He negated it from Himself when He said: **'There is nothing whatsoever like unto Him'** (42:11)."

Al-Shafi`i's hatred of dialectic theology *(kalâm)* was based on his extreme caution against errors which bear heavy consequences as they induce one into false beliefs. Among his sayings concerning this: "It is better for a scholar of knowledge

[182]Bayhaqi continues: "The hadith master Abu `Abd Allah [al-Hakim] and the hadith master al-Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-`Arabi have related to us from Mujahid that he said regarding this verse: "It means the direction of prayer to Allah *(qibla)*, therefore wheresoever you are, East and West, do not turn your faces except towards it."

to give a *fatwa* after which he is said to be wrong than to theologize and then be said to be a heretic *(zindîq)*. I hate nothing more than theology and theologians." Dhahabi comments: "This indicates that Abu `Abd Allah's position concerning error in the principles of the Religion *(al-usûl)* is that it is not the same as error in the course of scholarly exertion in the branches." The reason is that in belief and doctrine neither *ijtihâd* nor divergences are permitted. In this respect al-Shafi`i said: "It cannot be asked 'Why?' concerning the principles, nor 'How?'" Yet al-Shafi`i did not completely close the door to the use of *kalâm* in defense of the Sunna, as shown below and in the notice on Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

Yunus ibn Abi Ya`la narrated that al-Shafi`i defined the "principles" as: "The Qur'an, the Sunna, analogy *(al-qiyâs)*, and consensus *(al-ijmâ`)*"; he defined the latter to mean: "The adherence of the Congregation *(jamâ`a)* of the Muslims to the conclusions of a given ruling pertaining to what is permitted and what is forbidden after the passing of the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him."

Al-Shafi`i did not close the door on the right use of *kalâm* as is clear from Ibn Abi Hatim's narration from al-Rabi` of his words: "If I wished, I could produce a book against each one of those who deviated, but dialectic theology is none of my business, and I would not like to be attributed any part in it."[183] Similar to it is his advice to his student al-Muzani: "Take proofs from creation about the Creator, and do not burden yourself with the knowledge of what your mind did not reach." Ibn Abi Hatim himself spoke similarly when he was told of Ibn Khuzayma's unsuccessful attempt at *kalâm*: "It is preferable not to meddle with what we did not learn." Note that al-Shafi`i also spoke of his wish not to have a single letter out of all his works attributed to him, regardless of topic.

Al-Shafi`i's attitude towards *tasawwuf* was as strict as with *kalâm,* and he both praised it and denigrated its abuse at the hands of its corrupters. In criticism of the latter he said: "No-one becomes a Sufi in the morning except he ends up a dolt by noon" while on the other hand he declared in his *Diwan*: "Be at the same time a *faqîh* and a Sufi." In Mecca al-Shafi`i was the student of

[183]Al-Dhahabi said: "This breath of fresh air is mass-narrated from the Imam."

Fudayl ibn `Iyad. Imam al-Nawawi in his *Bustan al-`Arifin fi al-Zuhd wa al-Tasawwuf* ("The Garden of the Gnostics in Asceticism and *Tasawwuf*") narrated from al-Shafi`i the saying: "Only the sincere one *(al-mukhlis)* can recognize self-display *(al-riyâ')*." Al-Nawawi comments: "This means that it is impossible to know the reality of self-display and see its hidden shades except for one who resolutely seeks *(arâda)* sincerity. Such a one strives for a long time, searching, meditating, examining at length within himself until he knows, or knows something of what self-display is. This does not happen for everyone. Indeed, this happens only with special ones *(al-khawâss)*. But for a given individual to claim that he knows what self-diplay is, this is real ignorance on his part."

Al-Shafi`i deferred primacy in the foundations of *fiqh* to Imam Abu Hanifa with his famous statement: "People are all the children of Abu Hanifa in *fiqh*." Ibn Hajar al-Haytami mentioned in the thirty-fifth chapter of his book on Imam Abu Hanifa entitled *al-Khayrat al-Hisan*: "When Imam al-Shafi`i was in Baghdad, he would visit the grave of Imam Abu Hanifa, greet him, and then ask Allah for the fulfillment of his need through his means."

Two schools of legal thought or *madhahib* are actually attributed to al-Shafi`i, englobing his writings and legal opinions *(fatâwa)*. These two schools are known in the terminology of jurists as “The Old” *(al-qadîm)* and “The New” *(al-jadîd)*, corresponding respectively to his stays in Iraq and Egypt. The most prominent transmitters of the New among al-Shafi`i’s students are al-Buwayti,[184] al-Muzani, al-Rabi` al-Muradi, and al-Bulqini, in *Kitab al-Umm* (“The Motherbook”). The most prominent transmitters of the Old are Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Karabisi, al-Za`farani, and Abu Thawr, in *Kitab al-Hujja* (“Book of the Proof”). What is presently known as the Shafi`i position refers to the New except in approximately twenty-two questions, in which Shafi`i scholars and muftis have retained the positions of the Old.

Al-Subki related that the Shafi`i scholars considered al-Rabi`s narration from al-Shafi`i sounder from the viewpoint of

[184]Al-Shafi`i named him the most knowledgeable person in his school. He died in 231 in jail, bound in chains in Iraq for refusing to say that the Qur’an was created. May Allah have mercy on him and on all the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna*. Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar* (10:67-69 #1978).

transmission, while they considered al-Muzani's sounder from the viewpoint of *fiqh*, although both were established hadith masters. Al-Shafi`i said to al-Rabi`: "How I love you!" and another time: "O Rabi`! If I could feed you the Science I would feed it to you." Al-Qaffal al-Shashi in his *Fatawa* relates that al-Rabi` was slow in his understanding, and that al-Shafi`i once repeated an explanation forty times for him in a gathering, yet he did not understand it then got up and left in embarrassment. Later, al-Shafi`i called him in private and resumed explaining it to him until he understood. This shows the accuracy of Ibn Rahuyah's statement: "I consider the best part of me the time when I fully understand al-Shafi`i's discourse."

Al-Shafi`i took the verse **"Or if you have touched women"** (4:43) literally, and considered that contact between the sexes, even accidental, nullified ablution. This is also the position of Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Umar, al-Sha`bi, al-Nakha`i, al-Zuhri, and al-Awza`i, which is confirmed by Ibn `Umar's report: "Whoever kisses or touches his wife with his hand must renew his *wudû'*." It is authentic and related in numerous places including Malik's *Muwatta'*. Al-Shafi`i said: "Something similar has reached us from Ibn Mas`ud." They all read the above verse literally, without

interpreting "touch" to mean "sexual intercourse" as do the Hanafis, or "touch with pleasure" as do the Malikis.

A major contribution of al-Shafi`i in the foundations of the Law was his division of innovation *(al-bid`a)* into good and bad on the basis of `Umar's words about the *tarâwih* or congregational supererogatory night prayers in the month of Ramadan: "What a fine innovation this is!"[185] Harmala narrated that al-Shafi`i concluded: "Therefore, whatever innovation conforms to the Sunna is approved *(mahmûd)*, and whatever opposes it is abominable *(madhmûm)*."[186] Agreement formed in the Four Schools around his division, as illustrated by the endorsement of some major later authorities in each school. Among the Hanafis: Ibn `Abidin, al-Turkumani, and al-

[185]Narrated by Malik in *al-Muwatta'* and al-Bukhari in his *Sahih*.
[186]Narrated by Abu Nu`aym with his chain through Abu Bakr al-Ajurri in *Hilya al-Awliya'* (9:121 #13315) and by al-Bayhaqi in his *Madkhal* and *Manaqib al-Shafi`i* (1:469) with a sound chain, as stated by Ibn Taymiyya in his *Dar' Ta`arud al-`Aql wa al-Naql* (p. 171).

Tahanawi;[187] among the Malikis: al-Turtushi, Ibn al-Hajj, and al-Shatibi;[188] consensus among the Shafi`is;[189] and reluctant acceptance among later Hanbalis, who altered al-Shafi`i's terminology to read "lexical innovation" *(bid`a lughawiyya)* and "legal innovation" *(bid`a shar`iyya)*, respectively û although inaccurately û matching Shafi`i's "approved" and "abominable".[190]

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[187] Ibn `Abidin, *Hashiya* (1:376); al-Turkumani, *Kitab al-Luma` fi al-Hawadith wa al-Bida`* (Stuttgart, 1986, 1:37); al-Tahanawi, *Kashshaf Istilahat al-Funun* (Beirut, 1966, 1:133-135).

[188] Al-Turtushi, *Kitab al-Hawadith wa al-Bida`* (p. 158-159); Ibn al-Hajj, *Madkhal al-Shar` al-Sharif* (Cairo, 1336H 2:115); al-Shatibi, *Kitab al-I`tisam* (Beirut ed. 1:188).

[189] Abu Shama, *al-Ba`ith `ala Inkar al-Bida` wa al-Hawadith* (Riyad: Dar al-Raya, 1990 p. 93, Cairo ed. p. 12); al-`Izz ibn `Abd al-Salam, as mentioned by the following; al-Nawawi, *al-Adhkar* (Beirut: al-Thaqafiyya, p. 237), and *Tahdhib al-Asma' wa al-Lughat* (3:22); Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari* (13:253-254); al-Suyuti, introduction to *Husn al-Maqsid fi `Amal al-Mawlid* in *al-Hawi li al-Fatawi*. Etc. Note that "consensus" *(ijmΓ`)* is more inclusive than "agreement" *(ittifΓq)*, and binding.

[190] Ibn Rajab, *al-Jami` fi al-`Ulum wa al-Hikam* (2:50-53), and Ibn Taymiyya's section on *bid`a* in his *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim Mukhalafa Ashab al-Jahim*. This is also the position of Ibn Kathir: see his commentary of the verse: **"The Originator of the heavens and the earth!"** (2:117) in his *Tafsir*. He followed in this his teacher Ibn Taymiyya.

Among al-Shafi`i's other notable positions: Al-Muzani said: "I never saw any of the scholars make something obligatory on behalf of the Prophet as much as al-Shafi`i in his books, and this was due to his high remembrance of the Prophet. He said in the Old School: 'Supplication ends with the invocation of blessings on the Prophet, and its end is but by means of it.'" Al-Karabisi said: "I heard al-Shafi`i say that he disliked for someone to say 'the Messenger' *(al-Rasûl)*, but that he should say 'Allah's Messenger' *(Rasûl Allah)* out of veneration *(ta`zîm)* for him."

Among al-Shafi`i's other sayings:

- "The study of hadith is better than supererogatory prayer, and the pursuit of knowledge is better than supererogatory prayer." Ibn `Abd al-Barr in *Kitab al-`Ilm* listed the many hadiths of the Prophet on the superior merit of knowledge. However, al-Shafi`i by this saying meant the essence and purpose of knowledge, not knowledge for its own sake which leads to Satanic pride. The latter is widely available while true knowledge is the knowledge that leads to godwariness *(taqwa)*. This is confirmed by al-Shafi`i's

saying: “Knowledge is what benefits. Knowledge is not what one has memorized.” This is a corrective for those content to define knowledge as “the knowledge of the proof” *(ma`rifa al-dalîl)*. **“He gives wisdom to whomever He will, and whoever receives wisdom receives immense good.”** (2:269)

- “You [the scholars of hadith] are the pharmacists but we [the jurists] are the physicians.” This was explained by `Ali al-Qari in his book *Mu`taqad Abi Hanifa al-Imam* (p. 42): “The early scholars said: The hadith scholar without knowledge of *fiqh* is like a seller of drugs who is no physician: he has them but he does not know what to do with them; and the *fiqh* scholar without knowledge of hadith is like a physician without drugs: he knows what constitutes a remedy, but does not dispose of it.”

- “Malik was asked about *kalâm* and [the Science of] Oneness *(tawhîd)* and he said: ‘It is inconceivable that the Prophet should teach his Community hygiene and not teach them about Oneness! And Oneness is exactly what the Prophet said: ‘I was ordered to fight people until they

say ‘There is no God but Allah.’[191] So, whatever makes blood and property untouchable û that is the reality of Oneness *(haqîqa al-tawhîd)*.’” This is a proof from the *Salaf* against those who, in later times, innovated sub-divisions for *tawhîd* or legislated that their own understanding of Allah’s Attributes was a precondition for the declaration of Oneness. Al-Halimi said: “In this hadith there is explicit proof that that declaration *(lâ ilâha illallâh)* suffices to extirpate oneself from all the different kinds of disbelief in Allah Almighty.”[192]

- “Satiation weighs down the body, hardens the heart, does away with sagacity, brings on sleep, and weakens one from worship.” This is similar to the definition of *tasawwuf* as “hunger” *(al-jû`)* given by some of the early masters, who acquired hunger as a permanent attribute and were called “hungerers” *(jû`iyyûn)*. A notable example is al-Qasim ibn `Uthman al-`Abdi al-Dimashqi

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[191]A nearly-mass-narrated *(mashh√r)* hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim from Ibn `Umar, Abu Hurayra, Jabir, Anas, al-Nu`man ibn Bashir, Aws ibn Hudhayfa, and Tariq al-Ashja`i.
[192]Al-Bayhaqi, *al-Asma’ wa al-Sifat* p. 96.

al-Ju`i (d. 248), whom al-Dhahabi describes as "the Imam, the exemplar, the *wali*, the *muhaddith*, the shaykh of the Sufis and the friend of Ahmad ibn al-Hawari."

- "I never swore by Allah û neither truthfully nor deceptively." This is similar to the saying of the Sufi master Sahl ibn `Abd Allah al-Tustari narrated by al-Dhahabi: "Among the manners of the truthful saints *(al-siddîqîn)* is that they never swear by Allah, nor commit backbiting, nor does backbiting take place around them, nor do they eat to satiation, if they promise they are true to their word, and they never speak in jest."

- Al-Buwayti asked: "Should I pray behind the *Rafidi*?" Al-Shafi`i said: "Do not pray behind the *Rafidi*, nor behind the *Qadari*, nor behind the *Murji'*." Al-Buwayti said: "Define them for us." He replied: "Whoever says 'Belief consists only in speech' is a *Murji'*, and whoever says 'Abu Bakr and `Umar are not Imams' is a *Rafidi*, and whoever attributes destiny to himself is a *Qadari*."

Abu Hatim narrated from Harmala that al-Shafi`i said: "The Caliphs *(al-khulafâ')* are five: Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, and `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz." In his *Diwan* he named them "leaders of their people, by whose guidance one obtains guidance," and declaimed of the Family of the Prophet:

The Family of the Prophet are my intermediary to him! (wasîlatî)
Through them I hope to be given my record with the right hand.

and:

O Family of Allah's Messenger! To love you is an obligation
Which Allah ordained and revealed in the Qur'an.
It is enough proof of your immense glory that
Whoever invokes not blessings upon you, his prayer is invalid.

Ibn Hajar said that the first to write a biography of al-Shafi`i was Dawud al-Zahiri (d. 275). Al-Nawawi in *Tahdhib al-Asma' wa al-Lughat* (1:44) mentioned that the best biography of al-Shafi`i was al-Bayhaqi's for its sound chains of transmission. Ibn

Hajar summarized it and added to it al-Shafi`i's *Musnad* in his *Tawali al-Ta'sis fi Ma`ali Ibn Idris*.

In the introduction of his compendium of Shafi`i *fiqh* entitled *al-Majmu`* al-Nawawi mentions that al-Shafi`i used a walking stick for which he was asked: "Why do you carry a stick when you are neither old nor ailing?" He replied: "To remember I am only a traveller in this world."

Main sources: al-Shafi`i, *Diwan*; Abu Nu`aym, *Hilya al-Awliya'* 9:71-172 #442; al-Nawawi, *Tahdhib al-Asma' wa al-Lughat* 1:44-67 #2; al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* 8:377-423 #1539, 10:79, 10:649; al-Subki, *Tabaqat al-Shafi`iyya al-Kubra* 2:133-134; Ibn Hajar, *Tawali al-Ta'sis* p. 3-157.

AHMAD IBN MUHAMMAD IBN HANBAL,

AHMAD IBN MUHAMMAD IBN HANBAL, Abu `Abd Allah al-Dhuhli al-Shaybani al-Marwazi al-Baghdadi (d. 241). Al-Dhahabi says of him: “The true Shaykh of Islam and leader of the Muslims in his time, the hadith master and proof of the Religion. He took hadith from Hushaym, Ibrahim ibn Sa`d, Sufyan ibn `Uyayna, `Abbad ibn `Abbad, Yahya ibn Abi Za’ida, and their layer. From him narrated al-Bukhari [two hadiths in the *Sahih*], Muslim [22], Abu Dawud [254], Abu Zur`a, Mutayyan, `Abd Allah ibn Ahmad, Abu al-Qasim al-Baghawi, and a huge array of scholars. His father was a soldier û one of those who called to Islam û and he died young.” Al-Dhahabi continues:

- `Abd Allah ibn Ahmad said: “I heard Abu Zur`a [al-Razi] say: ‘Your father had memorized a million hadiths, which I rehearsed with him according to topic.’”[193]

- Hanbal said: “I heard Abu `Abd Allah say: ‘I memorized everything which I heard from Hushaym when he was alive.’”

- Ibrahim al-Harbi said: “I held Ahmad as one for whom Allah had gathered up the combined knowledge of the first and the last.”

[193]By the phrase “a million hadiths” are meant the chains of transmission, as the hadith texts themselves, without repetition, do not exceed ten thousand sound hadiths according to the hadith masters.

- Harmala said: "I heard al-Shafi`i say: 'I left Baghdad and did not leave behind me anyone more virtuous *(afdal)*, more learned *(a`lam)*, more knowledgeable *(afqah)* than Ahmad ibn Hanbal.'"

- `Ali ibn al-Madini said: "Truly, Allah reinforced this Religion with Abu Bakr al-Siddiq the day of the Great Apostasy *(al-Ridda)*, and He reinforced it with Ahmad ibn Hanbal the day of the Inquisition *(al-Mihna)*."

- Abu `Ubayd said: "The Science at its peak is in the custody of four men, of whom Ahmad ibn Hanbal is the most knowledgeable."

- Ibn Ma`in said, as related by `Abbas [al-Duri]: "They meant for me to be like Ahmad, but û by Allah! û I shall never in my life compare to him."

- Muhammad ibn Hammad al-Taharani said: "I heard Abu Thawr say: 'Ahmad is more learned û or knowledgeable û than al-Thawri.'"

Al-Dhahabi concludes: "Al-Bayhaqi wrote Abu `Abd Allah's biography *(sîra)* in one volume, so did Ibn al-Jawzi, and also *Shaykh al-Islam* [`Abd Allah al-Harawi] al-Ansari in a brief volume. He passed on to Allah's good pleasure on the day of *Jum`a*, the twelfth of *Rabi` al-Awwal* in the year 241, at the age of seventy-seven. I have two of his short-chained narrations *(`awâlîh)*, and a licence *(ijâza)* for the entire *Musnad*." Al-Dhahabi's chapter on Imam Ahmad in *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* counts no less than 113 pages.

One of the misunderstandings prevalent among the "Salafis" who misrepresent Imam Ahmad's school today is his position regarding *kalâm* or dialectic theology. It is known that he was uncompromisingly opposed to *kalâm* as a method, even if used as a means to defend the truth, preferring to stick to the plain narration of textual proofs and abandoning all recourse to dialectical or rational ones. Ibn al-Jawzi relates his saying: "Do not sit with the people of *kalâm*, even if they defend the Sunna." This attitude is at the root of his disavowal of al-Muhasibi. It also explains the disaffection of later Hanbalis towards Imam al-Ash`ari and his school, despite his subsequent standing as the Imam of Sunni Muslims *par excellence*. The reasons for this rift

are now obsolete although the rift has amplified beyond all recognizable shape, as it is evident, in retrospect, that opposition to Ash`aris, for various reasons, came out of a major misunderstanding of their actual contributions within the Community, whether as individuals or as a whole.

There are several general reasons why the Hanbali-*mutakallim* rift should be considered artificial and obsolete. First, *kalâm* in its original form was an innovation in Islam *(bid`a)* against which there was unanimous opposition among *Ahl al-Sunna*. The first to use *kalâm* were true innovators opposed to the Sunna, and in the language of the early scholars *kalâm* was synonymous with the doctrines of the *Qadariyya*, *Murji'a*, *Jahmiyya*, *Jabriyya*, *Rawâfid*, and *Mu`tazila* and their multifarious sub-sects. This is shown by the examples Ibn Qutayba gives of *kalâm* and *mutakallimûn* in his book *Mukhtalif al-Hadith*, none of which belongs to *Ahl al-Sunna*. Similarly the adherents of *kalâm* brought up in the speech of al-Hasan al-Basri, Ibn al-Mubarak, Ibn Rahuyah, Imam al-Shafi`i and the rest of the pre-Hanbali scholars of hadith are the innovators of the above-mentioned sects, not those who later opposed them using the same methods of reasoning. The latter cannot be put in the same

category. Therefore the early blames of *kalâm* cannot be applied to them in the same breath with the innovators.

Second, there is difference of opinion among the *Salaf* on the possible use of *kalâm* to defend the Sunna, notwithstanding Imam Ahmad's position quoted above. One reason why they disallowed it is *wara`*: because of extreme scrupulousness against learning and practicing a discipline initiated by the enemies of the Sunna. Thus they considered *kalâm* reprehensible but not forbidden, as is clear from their statements. For example, Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that al-Shafi`i said: "If I wanted to publish books refuting every single opponent [of the Sunna] I could easily do so, but *kalâm* is not for me, and I dislike that anything of it be attributed to me."[194] This shows that al-Shafi`i left the door open for others to enter a field which he abstained from entering out of strict Godwariness.

Third, *kalâm* is a difficult, delicate science which demands a mind above the norm. The imams forbade it as a *sadd al-dharî`a* or pre-empting measure. They rightly foresaw that unless one

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[194]Narrated from al-Rabi` by al-Dhahabi in the *Siyar* (8:388).

possessed an adequate capacity to practice it, one was courting disaster. This was the case with Ahmad's student Abu Talib, and other early Hanbalis who misinterpreted Ahmad's doctrinal positions as Bukhari himself stated. Bukhari, Ahmad, and others of the *Salaf* thus experienced first hand that one who played with *kalâm* could easily lapse into heresy, innovation, or disbelief. This was made abundantly clear in Imam Malik's answer to the man who asked how Allah established Himself over the Throne: "The establishment is known, the 'how' is inconceivable, and to ask about it is an innovation!" Malik's answer is the essence of *kalâm* at the same time as it warns against the misuse of *kalâm*, as observed by the late Dr. Abu al-Wafa' al-Taftazani.[195] Malik's reasoning is echoed by al-Shafi`i's advice to his student al-Muzani: "Take proofs from creation in order to know about the Creator, and do not burden yourself with the knowledge of what your mind did not reach." Similarly, Ibn Khuzayma and Ibn Abi Hatim admitted their technical ignorance of the science of *kalâm*, at the same time acknowledging its possible good use by

[195]See the relevant citation in the collection of essays entitled *al-Duktur Abu al-Wafa al-Taftazani, ustadhan lil-tasawwuf wa-mufakkiran Islamiyyan, 1930-1994: buhuth `anhu wa-dirasat mahdah ilayhi: kitab tadhkari,* ed. Atif al-Iraqi (Cairo: Dar al-Hidaya, 1995).

qualified experts. As for Ibn Qutayba, he regretted his *kalâm* days and preferred to steer completely clear of it.

In conclusion, any careful reader of Islamic intellectual history can see that if the Ash`ari scholars of *kalâm* had not engaged and defeated the various theological and philosophical sects on their own terrain, the silence of *Ahl al-Sunna* might well have sealed their defeat at the hands of their opponents. This was indicated by Taj al-Din al-Subki who spoke of the obligatoriness of *kalâm* in certain specific circumstances, as opposed to its superfluousness in other times. "The use of *kalâm* in case of necessity is a legal obligation *(wajib)*, and to keep silence about *kalâm* in case other than necessity is a *sunna*."[196]

The biographical notice on Imam Ahmad in the *Reliance of the Traveller* reads: "Out of piety, Imam Ahmad never gave a formal legal opinion *(fatwa)* while Shafi`i was in Iraq, and when he later formulated his school of jurisprudence, he mainly drew on explicit texts from the [Qur'an], hadith, and scholarly consensus, with relatively little expansion from analogical

[196]Al-Subki, *Tabaqat al-Shafi`iyya al-Kubra* (2:230).

reasoning *(qiyâs)*. He was probably the most learned in the sciences of hadith of the four great Imams of Sacred Law, and his students included many of the foremost scholars of hadith. Abu Dawud said of him: 'Ahmad's gatherings were gatherings of the afterlife: nothing of this world was mentioned. Never once did I hear him mention this-worldly things.' ... He never once missed praying in the night, and used to recite the entire [Qur'an] daily. He said, 'I saw the Lord of Power in my sleep, and said, "O Lord, what is the best act through which those near to You draw nearer?" and He answered, "Through [reciting] *(sic)* My word, O Ahmad." I asked, "With understanding, or without?" and He answered, "With understanding and without."'. . . Ahmad was imprisoned and tortured for twenty-eight months under the Abbasid caliph al-Mu`tasim in an effort to force him to publicly espouse the [*Mu`tazila*] position that the Holy [Qur'an] was created, but the Imam bore up unflinchingly under the persecution and refused to renounce the belief of *Ahl al-Sunna* that the [Qur'an] is the uncreated word of Allah, after which Allah delivered and vindicated him. When Ahmad died in 241/855, he was accompanied to his resting place by a funeral procession of eight hundred thousand men and sixty thousand

women, marking the departure of the last of the four great *mujtahid* Imams of Islam."

Ibn al-Jawzi narrates from Bilal al-Khawass that the latter met al-Khidr and asked him: "What do you say of al-Shafi`i?" He said: "One of the Pillar-Saints *(Awtâd)*." "Ahmad ibn Hanbal?" "He is a *Siddîq*."[197]

Main sources: al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala'* 9:434-547 #1876 and *Tadhkira al-Huffaz* 2:431 #438.

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[197]Ibn al-Jawzi, *Manaqib al-Imam Ahmad* (p. 144).

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